



Comhairle Contae Mhaigh Eo
Mayo County Council



DRAFT

Castlebar Town & Environs Local Area Plan 2023-2029

Contents

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT	8
1.1 Introduction/Context	8
1.2 Climate Action.....	8
1.3 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development	9
1.4 Spatial Planning Context	10
1.4.1 National Planning Framework.....	10
1.4.2 Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy	10
1.4.3 County and Town Development Plans.....	11
1.5 Strategic Growth Corridor.....	11
1.6 Composition of the Plan.....	12
1.6.1 Strategic Environmental Assessment.....	13
1.6.2 Appropriate Assessment (AA)	13
1.6.3 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA)	13
Chapter 2 DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY.....	14
2.1 Introduction	14
2.2 Regional Key Town.....	14
2.3 Vision Statement.....	14
2.4 Strategic Key Future Priorities.....	15
2.5 Strategic Goals.....	15
2.6 Development Strategy	16
2.7 Challenges and Opportunities.....	18
2.8 Core Strategy.....	19
2.8.1 Achieving Compact Growth	19
2.8.2 Compliance with the Core Strategy	19
2.8.3 Tiered Approach to Land Use Zoning.....	20
2.8.4 Development Densities	20
2.9 Integrating Climate Considerations into the Castlebar LAP	20
2.10 Development Strategy Policy & Objectives.....	21
Chapter 3 CLIMATE ACTION	23
3.1 Strategic Aim	23
3.2 Introduction	23
3.3 County Position	24
3.3.1 Mayo Climate Adaption Strategy.....	24

3.3.2	Local Initiatives.....	24
3.3.3	Castlebar Energy Plan	24
3.4	Decarbonising Castlebar and Reducing Greenhouse Emissions.....	25
3.4.1	Electricity Generation.....	25
3.4.2	Electric Vehicles (EVs)	25
3.4.3	Built Environment	26
3.4.4	Transport.....	26
3.4.5	Land Use	27
3.4.6	Waste	27
3.4.7	Nature Based Solutions	28
3.4.8	Greening of Castlebar	28
3.5	Climate Action Policies & Objectives	30
Chapter 4	TOWN CENTRE REGENERATION STRATEGY.....	33
4.1	Strategic Aims.....	33
4.2	Introduction	33
4.3	The Urban Structure of Castlebar	33
4.3.1	Town Centre Analysis.....	33
4.3.2	Areas in need of regeneration	34
4.4	Urban Development Strategy	36
4.5.1	Urban Development Strategy for Castlebar.....	36
4.5	Regeneration Strategy	36
4.5.1	Overview	36
4.5.2	Regeneration Strategy Approach.....	37
4.6	Character Areas & Opportunity Sites:.....	39
4.6.1	The Northern Quarter	39
4.6.2	Military Barracks Quarter	44
4.6.3	Spencer Quarter	47
4.6.4	Shopping Quarter	51
4.7	Town Centre & Regeneration Policy & Objectives	57
Chapter 5	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	59
5.1	Strategic Aims.....	59
5.2	Introduction	59
5.3	Castlebar-Westport Economic Growth Cluster	59
5.4	Economic Profile	60

5.5	Economic Development Strategy.....	60
5.5.1	The Economic Development Strategy for Castlebar will be achieved by:.....	61
5.5.2	Commercial: Office and Enterprise.....	61
5.5.3	Industry.....	62
5.6	Retail.....	63
5.6.1	(i) Town Centre Retail Areas.....	64
5.6.2	(ii) Inner & Outer Town Centre Areas.....	65
5.7	Tourism.....	66
5.8	Remote Working, Co-working and Business Workspaces.....	67
5.8.1	Live – Work Units.....	68
5.9	Economic Development Policy & Objectives.....	68
Chapter 6 HOUSING AND SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES.....		71
6.1	Strategic Aims.....	71
6.2	Introduction.....	71
6.3	Residential Development Strategy.....	71
6.4	Residential Development, Housing & Sustainable Communities.....	72
6.4.1	Housing Profile.....	72
6.4.2	Residential Development, Capacity and Delivery.....	72
6.4.3	Residential Density, Mix & Design.....	73
6.4.4	Density:.....	73
6.4.5	Mix & Height:.....	74
6.4.6	Housing for Older People / Special Needs Housing.....	75
6.4.7	Traveller Accommodation.....	75
6.4.8	Low Energy Housing.....	76
6.5	Community, Arts and Educational Facilities.....	76
6.6	Gaeltacht Service Town.....	77
6.7	Sports and Recreation.....	77
6.8	Open Space and Amenities.....	77
6.9	Mayo Age Friendly Strategy.....	77
6.10	Community and Climate Change.....	78
6.11	Residential Development & Sustainable Communities Policy & Objectives.....	78
Chapter 7 MOVEMENT & TRANSPORT.....		82
7.1	Strategic Aim.....	82
7.2	Introduction.....	82

7.3	Castlebar Context.....	82
7.4	Integration of Land Use, Transport and Sustainable Mobility.....	83
7.5	Castlebar Local Transport Plan (CTLP).....	83
7.5.1	Castlebar – Overview/Context.....	84
7.5.2	Main considerations.....	85
7.5.3	Concept.....	87
7.5.4	Strategy.....	88
7.6	Modal Share.....	90
7.6.1	Monitoring & Review Castlebar LTP.....	91
7.7	Roads.....	91
7.7.1	Strategic Context.....	91
7.7.2	Local Context:.....	92
7.8	Parking.....	92
7.9	Public Transport.....	93
7.9.1	Bus.....	93
7.9.2	Rail.....	94
7.10	Movement and Transport Policy & Objectives.....	94
Chapter 8 BUILT ENVIRONMENT.....		98
8.1	Strategic Aim:.....	98
8.2	Introduction.....	98
8.3	Built Heritage Conservation.....	98
8.4	Architectural Heritage and Record of Protected Structures.....	98
8.5	Architectural Conservation Area(s).....	99
8.6	Archaeological Heritage.....	99
8.7	Placemaking.....	100
8.8	Built Environment Policy & Objectives.....	100
Chapter 9 NATURAL ENVIRONMENT.....		103
9.1	Strategic Aim.....	103
9.2	Introduction.....	103
9.3	Natural Heritage and Designated Sites.....	103
9.3.1	Designated Sites.....	104
9.4	Protected Species.....	106
9.5	Local Biodiversity Zone.....	106
9.6	Invasive Species.....	107

9.7	Landscape	107
9.8	Ecological Infrastructure	108
9.9	Trees and Hedgerows	108
9.10	Natural Environment Policy and Objectives.....	108
Chapter 10	INFRASTRUCTURE AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES.....	111
10.1	Strategic Aim.....	111
10.2	Introduction/Context.....	111
10.3	Surface Water Drainage Infrastructure.....	111
10.4	Flood Risk Management.....	111
10.5	Drinking Water and Wastewater	112
10.5.1	Drinking Water	112
10.5.2	Wastewater Treatment	113
10.6	Energy Networks Infrastructure.....	113
10.6.1	Electricity.....	113
10.6.2	Natural Gas.....	113
10.7	Waste Management.....	114
10.8	Information Communications Technology (ICT) and Broadband.....	114
10.9	Infrastructure and Environmental Services Policies and Objectives	114
Chapter 11	LAND USE ZONING OBJECTIVES.....	119
11.1	Strategic Aim:	119
11.2	Introduction	119
11.3	Urban Design Principles	120
11.4	Land Use Zoning Objectives.....	121
11.5	Land Use Zoning Matrix:.....	122
Chapter 12	IMPLEMENTATION & MONITORING	127
12.1	Implementation Strategy	127
12.2	Development Contributions.....	128
12.2.1	Cash Deposit/Security	128
12.2.2	Urban Regeneration Development Fund (URDF).....	128
12.3	Active Land Management.....	129
12.3.1	Phasing of Development	129
12.3.2	Monitoring and Implementation	129
12.4	Implementation and Monitoring of the Core Strategy	130
12.5	Strategic Environmental Assessment.....	130

12.5.1 Indicators & Targets.....	130
12.6 Local Transport Plan.....	131
12.7 Sources.....	131
Appendices.....	132
Appendix 1 – Settlement Capacity Assessment and Map	133

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

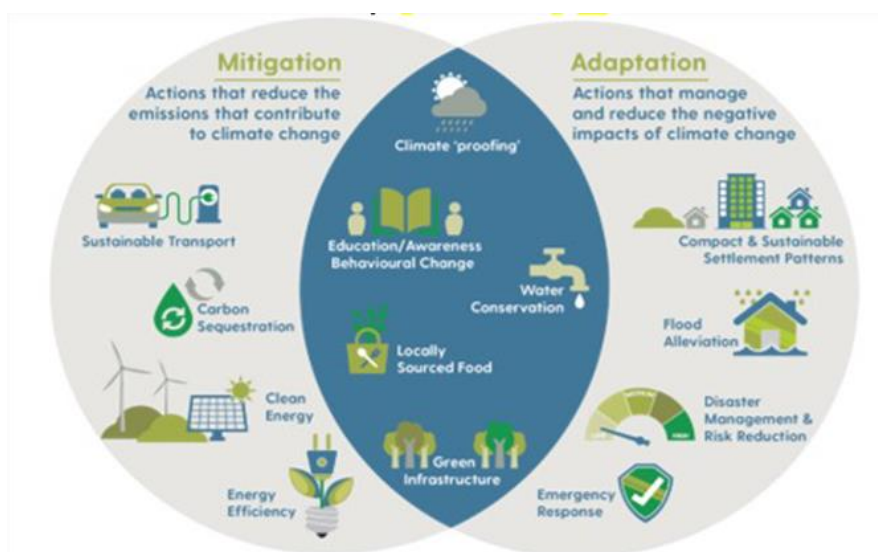
1.1 Introduction/Context

The Castlebar Town and Environs Local Area Plan (the ‘Plan’) has been prepared in accordance with the requirements and provisions of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended (the ‘Act’), in particular Sections 18-20 of the Act. A local area plan is required to be prepared in respect of an area that is designated as a town in the most recent census with a population in excess of 5,000 and is situated in the functional area of the planning authority which is a county council. The 2016 Census of Population indicated that the settlement of Castlebar had a total population of 12,068 persons. A local area plan is therefore mandatory for Castlebar.

The Plan sets out an overall strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of Castlebar consistent with Climate Action, the Agenda 2030, the Mayo County Development Plan 2022-2028; the National Planning Framework (NPF); the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) 2022-2032 for the Northern and Western Region; and the Mayo County Council Climate Change Adaptation Strategy. The strategy is also informed by Ministerial Guidelines, issued pursuant to Section 28 of the Act, together with EU requirements regarding Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA); an Appropriate Assessment/Natura Impact Report (AA/NIR); and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA).

1.2 Climate Action

This Plan is set in a context where climate change is accepted as a global challenge and requires climate action responses in adaptation and mitigation to ensure a healthy, economically thriving, liveable built environment. One of the key National Strategic Outcomes of the NPF is to transition to a low carbon and climate resilient society. Mayo County Council’s Climate Change Adaptation Strategy (Climate Ready Mayo), 2019-2024, forms part of Ireland’s national strategy for climate adaptation, as set out in the National Adaptation Framework 2018 (NAF). The purpose of this Strategy is to ensure that climate adaptation considerations are mainstreamed into all plans and policies and integrated into all operations and functions of the local authority, and it is a policy of the Mayo County Development Plan 2022-2028 to support its implementation.



The compact growth agenda outlined in the NPF is reinforced through Ireland’s Climate Action Plan 2021, which promotes extensive retrofitting of existing premises and housing stock and the prioritisation of brownfield and compact development. The actions committed to in the Climate Action Plan 2021 strongly align and support the regeneration and revitalisation of Ireland’s towns, including through reducing demand for travel by car, sustaining economic and social activity at street level and increasing access to shops, employment and amenities by sustainable transport modes.

1.3 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted by all United Nations Member States in 2015, provides a shared blueprint for peace and prosperity for people and the planet, now and into the future. At its heart are the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which are an urgent call for action by all countries - developed and developing - in a global partnership. The 2030 Agenda encourages countries to set out a holistic approach to achieving a sustainable future for all by developing national responses to the SDGs and incorporate them into planning and policy.



Ireland is committed to achieving the SDGs, as set out in the Department of Environment, Climate and Communication’s ‘National Implementation Plan for Sustainable Development Goals 2022-2024. There is significant alignment between the NPF’s National Strategic Outcomes and the SDGs. A key objective of the National Implementation Plan is to embed the framework provided by the 2030 Agenda into the work of national and local government.

1.4 Spatial Planning Context



1.4.1 National Planning Framework

The National Planning Framework sets out a high-level strategic plan for shaping the future growth of Ireland and provides National Strategic Outcomes for realising the vision of the plan.



The NPF sits at the highest tier of planning policy in Ireland, and all regional and local planning policy should be consistent with the principles contained within it.

1.4.2 Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy

The Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) introduces a Growth Framework for the Northern and Western Region, which includes a settlement hierarchy, growth ambitions and supporting policy framework to advance the spatial and economic development of the region. The Northern and

Western Assembly designates Castlebar as a Key Town in the RSES and identifies key priorities for investment and growth in the town, as set out in Chapter 2 of the LAP.



The RSES identifies Castlebar as a strategic employment centre of significant scale, which acts as a regional driver to complement and support the higher order urban areas in the region. The regional strategy seeks to support and grow the role of Castlebar, in tandem with the town of Westport, to strengthening the urban structure of the region, thereby creating the necessary critical mass to become a significant economic driver for the County and Region, enabling the realisation of the Atlantic Economic Corridor (AEC).

1.4.3 County and Town Development Plans

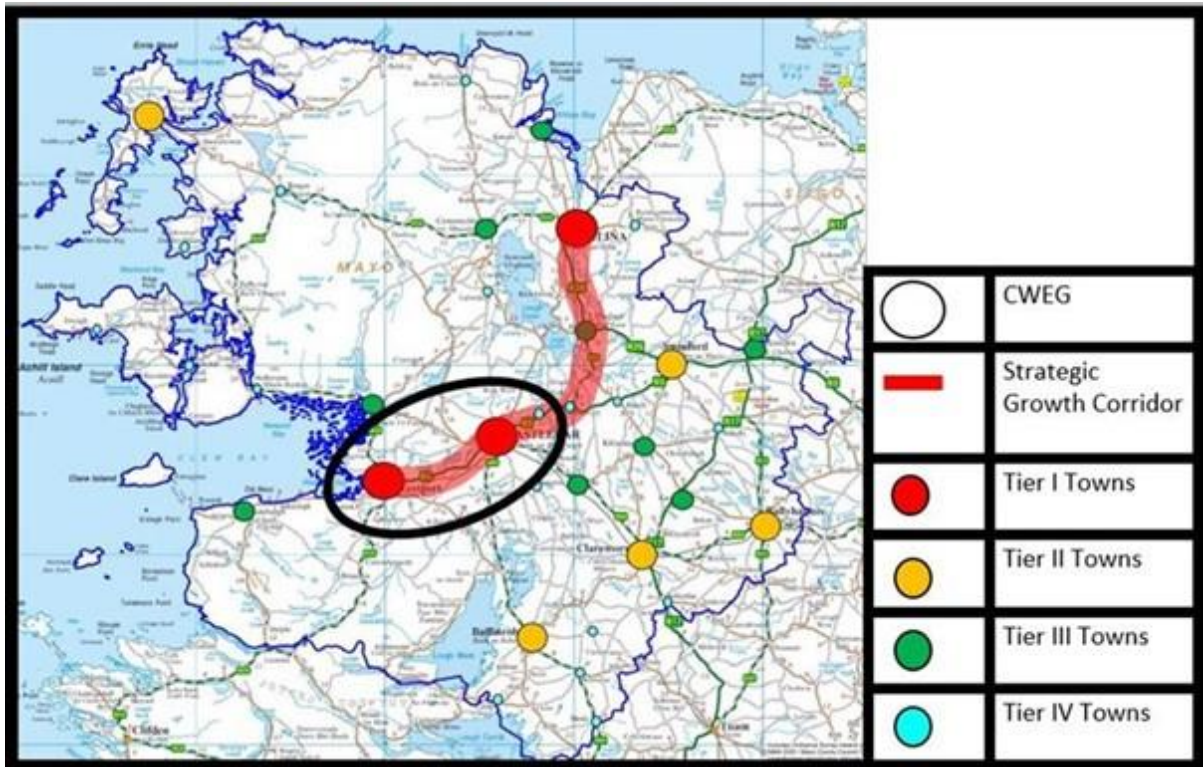
The Castlebar Local Area Plan must be consistent with the provisions of the Mayo County Development Plan (CDP) 2022-2028. The Core Strategy of the Mayo CDP sets out the population and household targets, in addition to the zoning requirements to facilitate new residential for Castlebar over the plan period. The CDP also contains a suite of policies and objectives to guide development, which should be read in conjunction with this Plan. Upon final adoption, the Castlebar LAP will replace the Castlebar Town and Environs Plan 2008-2014 (as extended).

Where conflicting policies and objectives arise between the CDP and the LAP, the policies and objectives of the CDP shall take precedence. It should be noted that the general development management guidelines applicable to the plan area are included in the Mayo County Development Plan. This Plan therefore includes policies and objectives that are specific to the future development of the town of Castlebar.

1.5 Strategic Growth Corridor

At a strategic level, the Mayo CDP recognises that the economic development of Mayo will be further enhanced through the development of the economic growth clusters in the county. Castlebar, along with Westport and the Key Town of Ballina are located within a central strategic growth corridor in

the county (See Map 1.1 below). From a regional perspective, this corridor provides urban places of scale between the Galway Metropolitan Area to the south and the Sligo Regional Growth Centre to the north, thereby contributing to the realisation of the Atlantic Economic Corridor (AEC).



Map 1.1 - Castlebar Westport Economic Growth Cluster in context of County Mayo

A key economic driver of this central corridor is the Castlebar-Westport Economic Growth (CWEG) Cluster (See Map 1.1), which is underpinned by an economic strategy to further strengthen linkages and harness future economic opportunities. Castlebar is intrinsically linked to the nearby town of Westport through their strong economic, commercial and social linkages and interdependencies. The Mayo CDP supports and promotes a future linked regional growth centre of Castlebar and Westport in the next RSES. The upgrading of the N5 route and increased frequency of rail services will reduce the commuting time between Westport and Castlebar. The increased connectivity between both population centres will strengthen the urban structure of the region by creating a critical mass.

1.6 Composition of the Plan

The Plan comprises of two volumes. Volume I consists of the written statement, accompanying maps and appendices. Volume II comprises the Environmental Reports including the Strategic Environmental Assessment, Appropriate Assessment and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment.

The written statement shall take precedence over the maps should any discrepancy arise between them. In the full interpretation of all objectives for the Castlebar Town & Environs LAP, it is essential that both the County Development Plan (CDP) and the Local Area Plan (LAP) are read in tandem. Where conflicting objectives arise between the CDP and the LAP, the objectives of the CDP shall take precedence. It should be noted that the general development management standards applicable to the Plan area are included in the Mayo County Development Plan. The Plan therefore includes policies and objectives that are specific to the future development of the town and environs of Castlebar.

A number of stand-alone documents also accompany the Plan, providing for evidence-led approach to the formulation of the written statement. Accordingly, the following data-based documents have been prepared to inform the Plan and are published alongside the document.

1.6.1 Strategic Environmental Assessment

The Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) process is the formal systematic evaluation of the likely significant environmental effects of implementing a plan or programme before a decision is made to adopt the plan or programme. It informs the plan-making process of the likely environmental impacts of alternative actions and contributes to the integration of environmental considerations into plan-making. SEA is mandatory for plans for areas with a population of 10,000 or more, therefore, a SEA is required for this Plan.

The findings of the SEA are set out in the Environmental Report, which, while constituting part of the Plan documentation, is presented as a separate document. The Environmental Report provides a clear understanding of the likely environmental consequences of decisions regarding the location of development in the Plan area. The mitigation measures needed to offset potential adverse effects of the Plan and future monitoring proposals have been transposed from the Environmental Report into the Plan.

1.6.2 Appropriate Assessment (AA)

The requirement for Appropriate Assessment of plans or projects, is outlined in Article 6(3) and (4) of the European Communities (1992) Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora ('Habitats Directive'). The assessment examines the implications of proceeding with the plan or project within its zone of influence, in view of the conservation objectives of European Site(s). This Plan was screened for AA during its preparation at draft stage. The screening found that significant effects on European Sites, alone or in combination with other plans or projects, could not be screened out, and therefore, a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment/Natura Impact Assessment (NIR) was required. All AA recommendations have been integrated into the Plan. The emerging conclusion of the AA is that the Plan will not adversely affect the integrity of European Sites, in light of their conservation objectives. The AA NIR is presented as a separate document accompanying the Plan in Volume II.

1.6.3 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA)

Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) is an assessment of flood risk and includes mapped boundaries for indicative flood risk zones, taking into account factors such as local knowledge, site walkovers and flood risk indicators. The SFRA is required to be prepared in accordance with the requirements of The Planning System and Flood Risk Assessment Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2009) and Circular PL02/2014 (August 2014). All SFRA recommendations have been integrated into the Plan. The SFRA is presented as a separate document accompanying the Plan in Volume II.

Chapter 2 DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

2.1 Introduction

The Development Strategy has been informed by the NPF, RSES, Mayo County Development Plan and National Climate Action Plans, which will influence the sustainable future growth of Castlebar over the lifetime of the plan and beyond. This Plan has also been informed and guided by the findings and recommendations of the Strategic Environmental Assessment, Appropriate Assessment (AA) and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA), accompanying this Plan in Volume II. The development strategy for Castlebar town and environs is guided by the vision statement, key future priorities, and strategic aims set out in this chapter.

2.2 Regional Key Town

Castlebar is designated as a Key Town in the RSES. Key Towns are considered regionally strategic employment centres of significant scale that can act as regional drivers complimenting and supporting higher-order urban areas within the settlement hierarchy. They have the potential to accommodate a significant level of growth in population and employment through appropriate investment in infrastructure, support services and placemaking initiatives. The regional strategy seeks to develop Castlebar in tandem with the nearby town of Westport, in order to maximise the existing strong economic, commercial and social links and interdependencies, which in turn will strengthen the urban structure of the region.

2.3 Vision Statement

Mayo County Council has a long-term vision of a future linked regional growth centre of Castlebar and Westport. The vision statement below for the LAP supports this long-term vision.

VISION STATEMENT

To support and grow the role of the Key Town of Castlebar, in tandem with Westport, to become a future linked Regional Growth Centre for the Western Region, and continue to facilitate its sustainable, socio-economic growth within the context of a high-quality environment and a strong and vibrant diverse sustainable community, supporting a wide range of employment opportunities, services and amenities. Thereby continuing to make Castlebar an attractive place to live, work, invest, do business, visit and invest in, whilst ensuring a transition to a low carbon and climate resilient town.

The development of the long-term vision will be further enhanced through the development of the Castlebar-Westport Economic Growth Cluster (CWEG). The CWEG Cluster seeks to harness and develop the complementary strengths and synergies between both towns and their functional hinterland, creating connected centres of scale, with the necessary critical mass, in terms of population and employment, to enable them to compete and grow to fulfil their potential and drive regional and national development in tandem with regional and national policy.

2.4 Strategic Key Future Priorities

This Plan has been prepared in the context of a long-term vision for Castlebar, which will only be achieved by focussed implementation of targeted measures and key priorities over the short to medium/long term, some of which may extend beyond the life of this Plan. The Plan presents an opportunity to create compact, sustainable communities and liveable places. It also provides the opportunity to address shortfalls in social infrastructure and initiate the necessary transition to a low carbon and sustainable model of development that will improve the quality of life for people living in the town.

The RSES has identified the following key priorities for Castlebar:

- To support and grow the role of Castlebar, in tandem with the town of Westport, as a driver of economic development for the county and region, building on the dual capacity, and combined strengths of both towns in terms of population, established commercial, social and cultural links and proximity, thereby strengthening the urban structure of the region and enabling the realisation the Atlantic Economic Corridor (AEC).
- Build on Castlebar's strong enterprise and associated skills base, strong infrastructural base in terms of road and rail connectivity, Metropolitan Area Network (MAN) fibre optic with proximity to the Atlantic Europe Connect sub-sea telecommunications cable, in conjunction with proximity to Ireland West Airport Knock and the AEC, which position the town as a location for further inward investment.
- Support the continued development of the Atlantic Technological University in Castlebar.
- Utilise and expand upon the capacity that exists within commercial/industrial estates and the business and technology park with an emphasis on developing a facility similar to Westport's Leeson Centre.
- Improve cycle and walking tourism/recreational infrastructure and connectivity of the Great Western Greenway at Castlebar to Westport and Wild Atlantic Way and other tourism related infrastructure.
- Deliver on the potential for regeneration within the town core, particularly the old Military Barracks, as well as significant tracts of land directly adjacent to the main streets.
- Remove barriers to development through enhanced road & rail connectivity to and from Castlebar including:
 - I. Upgrading of the entirety of the N5 to a TEN-T 'High-Quality Road'
 - II. Upgrade of N60 from Castlebar to Claremorris (critical link to the N17/AEC and Ireland West Airport Knock and SDZ)

2.5 Strategic Goals

The strategic goals, which relate to the advancement of the Plan's vision, are set out hereunder for each chapter of the Plan. The Plan aims to build on previous successes and to strengthen Castlebar's strategic advantage, in tandem with Westport, as the county town and regional economic driver. The strategic goals will also ensure the growth of Castlebar meets the needs of local communities; provides

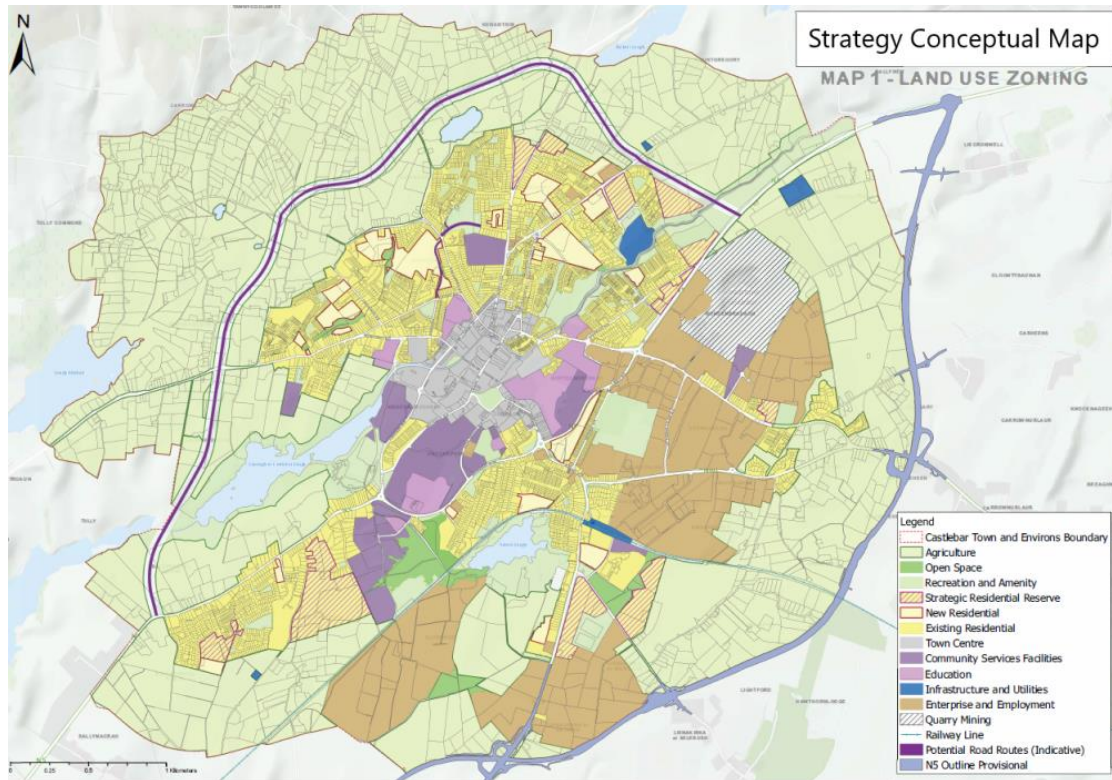
for high quality built and natural environments; facilitates infrastructure upgrades; and maximises economic development, while combatting and adapting to climate change.

- **Town Centre Regeneration:** *To develop a robust and design-led urban regeneration and development strategy; to maximise the strengths of the town; and to promote sustainable movement. To integrate new and regenerated areas within the historic core in a contemporary manner that complements the existing urban structure and heritage of the town. To create an integrated and commercially robust, liveable and sustainable town. To ensure that best practice urban design principles are applied to all new development, based on the principle that well-planned and integrated development enhances the sustainability, attractiveness and liveability of an area.*
- **Economic Development & Employment:** *To support and enhance the sustainable economic growth of Castlebar, consistent with its role as a Key Town through the provision of designated areas for high quality employment, through the expansion and protection of its tourism product and through the enhancement and expansion of its role as a thriving retail destination.*
- **Housing & Communities:** *To facilitate and deliver liveable, high-quality, nearly zero-energy, integrated residential development that provides for an appropriate demographic mix, in tandem with the delivery of the required social and physical infrastructure to support the development of vibrant and diverse communities.*
- **Movement & Transport:** *Promote and develop a sustainable, integrated transport system for Castlebar that prioritises walking, cycling and public transport, and provides an appropriate level of road infrastructure, road capacity and traffic management to support future development and enhance connectivity to and from regional towns and cities.*
- **Built Environment:** *To recognise and enhance the unique identity, character and built heritage of Castlebar, and to improve quality of life through the application of healthy placemaking, underpinned by good urban design with the creation of attractive public spaces that are vibrant, distinctive, safe and accessible and which promote and facilitate positive, social interaction.*
- **Natural Environment:** *To protect, conserve, enhance and sustain the natural environment of Castlebar and promote climate adaptation, placemaking and enhance biodiversity through promotion of green infrastructure for future generations.*
- **Infrastructure and Environmental Services:** *To phase future growth in line with the capacity of supporting physical infrastructure and to ensure it occurs in accordance with the principles of proper planning and sustainable development.*

2.6 Development Strategy

The SEA assessed three alternative development scenarios for the Castlebar Town and Environs LAP, considered to be realistic, reasonable, implementable and viable. Scenario 3 as the SEA is the preferred development strategy being pursued in the Castlebar LAP. This option is considered the most effective in the delivery of a sustainable, low carbon and climate resilient future for the town, consistent with national, regional and local planning policy. The vision and strategic aims for Castlebar

targets reducing the effects of climate change, through focusing on the delivery of compact growth, town centre regeneration, sustainable mobility, creation of sustainable communities, protection of built and natural heritage, utilising services and infrastructure, green and blue infrastructure protection and enhancement, while also promoting and maximising the most efficient and sustainable use of land.



Map 2.1 –Strategy Conceptual Map

Key Elements of the Development Strategy include:

- **Compact Growth** – New residential development to be accommodated within the existing built-up footprint of the town on brownfield/vacant/infill sites in the town centre, existing and new residential areas, at appropriate densities, and optimising existing social and physical infrastructure
- **Sustainable Transport and Mobility** – Effective integration of transport and land use through pursuing compact growth through the delivery of the Urban Greenway and improved accessibility to existing residential areas in order to encourage and facilitate active mobility, and by implementing a suite of measures from the Castlebar Local Transport Plan to encourage sustainable transportation within the Plan area.
- **Built Environment** – Enhancing the built environment and protecting the character of Castlebar’s built heritage through a strong emphasis on promoting opportunities for placemaking and urban regeneration, particularly in the town centre, creating attractive, liveable, well designed, high quality urban places that provide for a high quality of life and well-being, whilst appropriately protecting the character of historic built heritage.
- **Natural Environment**—To protect and enhance Castlebar’s environmental resources, including the networks of green and blue Infrastructure throughout the plan area. This is through

supporting measures to achieve a sustainable, low carbon and climate resilient future for the town, including promoting a sustainable built and natural environment, maximising the most efficient and sustainable use of land, and promoting a security of energy supply through renewable energy sources.

- **Sustainable Communities** – Promoting vibrant communities where people can live, work and enjoy access to a range of community services for all needs and ages and promote social integration through a range of housing developments with an appropriate mixture of house type, tenures and sizes to meet all needs Castlebar.

2.7 Challenges and Opportunities

While the challenges affecting the current urban structure of Castlebar are substantial, there are several areas of opportunity, that if acted upon, would greatly assist in the creation of a more integrated urban structure and better-connected town. These opportunities can be summarised as follows:

Connecting the town centre and the periphery: There is a major spatial disconnection between the commercial core and the employment clusters around the periphery. The regeneration of the town centre can assist in the delivery of opportunities for initiating new and improved high-quality links between the historic town core and new developments at the edge.

Integrating residential areas into the urban structure: The tendency to create large isolated blocks of housing has created disconnected and car dependent residential areas that lead to the fragmentation of the overall urban structure. Mayo County Council have prepared a Local Transport Plan for Castlebar (CLPT). The CLTP examines the potential for the incorporation of sustainable transport with integrated, legible, well connected and permeable neighbourhoods, as well as the feasibility of public transport options within the town and environs, thus improving access to social and community infrastructure. The CLPT will inform and assist in the approach for future residential development of Castlebar and will ensure that the town grows in a coherent, connected and unified manner.

Using diverse movement networks as connective links: Movement infrastructure is biased towards facilitating private car access. Connectivity between key locations, destinations and residential communities is poor and has led to fragmentation of the town and the excessive use of a small number of routes. The construction of the Inter-Urban Greenway which will run through the town centre and alongside the Castlebar River will provide an off-road option to serve sustainable modes of travel i.e. walking & cycling which will connect the North-Eastern to South-Western hinterlands via the urban core of Castlebar.

Unifying the urban structure through a high-quality public realm: The existing public realm of Castlebar is highly fragmented, under exploited and suffers from high levels of traffic movement and congestion which detract from the overall experience of the town, particularly within the historic core area. A strategic approach to the public realm, combined with the full implementation of the Local Transport Plan, will generate and sustain spatial unity in the urban structure over the longer term.

2.8 Core Strategy

The Castlebar Local Area Plan must be consistent with the provisions of the Mayo County Development Plan, as per Section 19(2) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended). Local Area Plans take a detailed look at a specific area and provide a land use planning framework and principles for the future development of the area.

Castlebar is a Tier 1 town in the core and settlement strategies of the Mayo County Development Plan. The core strategy of the County Development Plan allocates 21.8% of the overall housing target growth for Mayo to Castlebar to accommodate a projected population growth rate of 21.4%, as set out below in Table 2.1. It identifies that an increase of 2,583 persons to the year of 2028 and a dwelling target of 708 additional units to the year 2028 is required.

Town	Population 2016	Population 2027	Population Growth Rate %	Housing Targets	Housing Growth Rate %	Quantum of lands zoned for residential use (Hectares)
Castlebar	12,068	14,651	21.4%	708	21.8%	36.87

Table 2.1: Population change in Castlebar Agglomeration (Urban & Rural)

It is critically important for the sustainable growth of Castlebar that future housing is delivered in a compact manner in accordance with sustainable principles and the NPF/RSES objectives, meeting housing need requirements. Furthermore, it is critically important to ensure that sufficient lands are zoned for employment uses in the town. This will provide employment for both people living in the town and within the wider catchment, which in turn will advance the economic growth of Castlebar.

2.8.1 Achieving Compact Growth

The National Planning Framework (NPF) requires that at least 30% of all new housing units are delivered within the existing urban footprint (CSO Boundary) of the town. The development strategy seeks to concentrate all new homes within the existing built-up area of the town. The Plan supports the delivery of new homes through the appropriate redevelopment of town centre regeneration sites for a mixture of uses. In addition, the majority of new homes are directed towards infill greenfield sites zoned 'New Residential' within existing residential neighbourhood areas off the Newport Road, Westport Road, Pontoon Road, Turlough Road, Link Road, Ballinrobe Road, Rathbawn/Garryduff and Moneen.

The Plan also supports the delivery of new homes within existing residential areas through consolidation, infilling and densification over the plan period, where development can be assimilated satisfactorily through design, layout and amenity in a manner that does not detract from the character of the area. This will allow for efficient use of existing services, facilities and supports the existing and planned sustainable transport network as set out in the Castlebar Local Transport Plan.

2.8.2 Compliance with the Core Strategy

To ensure compliance with the core strategy of the Mayo County Development Plan 2022-2028 and its housing allocation for Castlebar, it will be necessary to monitor the number of residential units permitted and developed on an annual basis. This enables a closer alignment between the core strategy population projections, development activity and all necessary physical, social and community infrastructure. Where it is apparent that 'New Residential' zoned lands cannot or will not be developed within the plan period, residential development may be considered on lands zoned 'Strategic Residential Reserve'.

2.8.3 Tiered Approach to Land Use Zoning

Appendix 3 of the NPF requires all plans to adopt a tiered approach to land use zoning and sets out a two-tier approach to land zoning as follows:

Tier 1: Serviced Zoned Land – Lands that are able to connect to existing development services and generally positioned within the existing built-up footprint of a settlement or contiguous to existing developed lands or spatially sequential within the plan area.

Tier 2: Serviceable Zoned Land – Lands that are not currently sufficiently serviced to support new development but have the potential to become fully serviced within the life of the plan. These lands may be positioned within the existing built-up footprint of a settlement, or contiguous to existing developed lands or to Tier 1 zoned lands. The potential for delivery of the required services and/or capacity to support new development on Tier 2 lands must be identified and specific details provided by the planning authority in the form of an Infrastructural Assessment.

The land use zonings within this Plan were assessed in terms of their potential for future development based on their serviceability as per the findings of the Settlement Capacity Assessment accompanying this plan (Refer to Appendix I).

2.8.4 Development Densities

The Plan adopts a site-specific approach to development densities. The density of development and number of units permissible will be determined at detailed design stage based on a full assessment of site characteristics, local conditions, design sensitivities, connectivity and overall quality of the scheme and having regard to the various provisions within the development management guidelines, as set out within the Mayo County Development Plan 2022-2028 and the relevant Section 28 Ministerial Guidelines.

2.9 Integrating Climate Considerations into the Castlebar LAP

The Plan places climate action at the heart of its vision and promotes a development strategy to achieve compact growth, town centre urban regeneration, a sustainable transportation system, and best practice in low carbon energy systems, planning and design. The Plan also places a priority and focuses on enhancing and protecting biodiversity, natural heritage and the environment of the town and its environs. The LAP has been guided by the UN Sustainable Development Goals and climate action provisions of the NPF and RSES. The Plan supports the sectoral emission reduction targets of the national climate action plans and the transition to a low carbon and climate resilient future.

2.10 Development Strategy Policy & Objectives

Development Strategy Policies	
It is a Policy of the Council to:	
DSP 1	Support and Facilitate the sustainable growth of social, economic and residential development in Castlebar in accordance with the National Planning Framework, the Northern & Western Regional Spatial Economic Strategy 2020-2032, and the Mayo County Development Plan 2022-2028 (and any review thereof).
DSP 2	Support the compact growth of Castlebar to ensure that new development proceeds in a sustainable manner and at an appropriate scale, density and sequence and in line with the Core Strategy.
DSP 3	Promote measures to reduce vacancy and the underuse of existing building stock and support initiatives that promote the reuse, refurbishment and retrofitting of existing buildings within the Castlebar Plan area.
DSP 4	Ensure that sufficient land is available at appropriate locations to satisfy the Economic Development Strategy and County Core Strategy growth allocation for Castlebar and to ensure Castlebar maintains its status as one of Mayo's Key Towns and that key employment sites are provided.
DSP 5	Ensure the vitality and viability of the town centre is maintained and enhanced and to strengthen its function by facilitating the development of residential, retail, community, tourism, professional and other services, subject to compliance with the policies and development management standards of the Mayo County Development Plan 2022-2028.
DSP 6	Ensure that all new development within the Castlebar LAP area accord with the policies, objectives and development standards set out in the Mayo County Development 2022-2028 in respect of waste water systems.
DSP 7	Support the effective and efficient use of land in Castlebar, prioritising compact growth through the development of brownfield/infill land in the built-up footprint of the town in preference to greenfield land.
DSP 8	Require the preparation and assessment of all planning applications in the plan area to have regard to the information, data and requirements of Appropriate Assessment, Natura Impact Report, SEA Environment Report and Strategy Flood Risk Assessment Report that accompany this LAP. There shall be a requirement of Ecological Impact Assessment as appropriate in the Plan area.

Development Strategy Objectives	
It is an Objective of the Council to:	
DSO 1	Deliver at least 30% of all new homes in Castlebar within the existing built up footprint of the town.

DSO 2	Seek the sustainable intensification and consolidation of the existing built environment in accordance with the objectives for compact growth in higher-level spatial plans through appropriate infill, brownfield development, supported by the necessary physical and community infrastructure.
DSO 3	Promote sustainable economic development, enterprise and employment opportunities and prioritise the town centre as the primary location for retail and services.
DSO 4	Promote and facilitate sustainable modes of transport prioritising walking, cycling and public transport, whilst protecting and improving existing road infrastructure.
DSO 5	Protect, conserve and enhance the built environment, through promoting awareness, utilising relevant heritage legislation and ensuring quality urban design principles are applied to all new developments, respecting historic and architectural heritage.
DSO 6	Protect, enhance and connect areas of natural heritage, green and blue infrastructure and open space for the benefits of quality of life and biodiversity, capitalising on climate change adaptation and flood risk measures.
DSO 7	Ensure the highest quality of public realm and urban design principles are applied to all new developments.
DSO 8	Guide the future development of Castlebar in accordance with the Town Centre First policy approach seeking to bring people and appropriate business/services back into the heart of Castlebar through place-making, good quality urban design, sustainable mobility and control of development in other locations which might undermine this objective.
DSO 9	Ensure the future development of Castlebar supports the just transition to a low carbon society and economy, implementing national policy to reduce gas emissions, improve environmental quality and contribute to national targets for climate change.
DSO 10	Monitor the scale, type, tenure and location of constructed and permitted developments in Castlebar during the lifetime of the Plan and apply appropriate development management standards to ensure compliance with the Core Strategy and the County Development Plan to achieve the delivery of strategic, plan-led and coordinated balanced development within the town.

Chapter 3 CLIMATE ACTION

3.1 Strategic Aim

The strategic aim of this chapter is to transition Castlebar to a low carbon and climate resilient town, with an emphasis on reduction in energy demand and greenhouse gas emissions, through a combination of effective mitigation and adaptation responses to climate change; in addition to maximising the opportunities for energy efficiency, renewables and decarbonisation.

3.2 Introduction

Climate change has emerged as one of the biggest global environmental challenges facing current and future generations. Climate change can be defined as the alterations to climate directly or indirectly attributed to human activities, which release greenhouse gases into the atmosphere.

Reducing greenhouse gas emissions and building climate resilience can, as well as tackling climate change, also create co-benefits, including cleaner air, health benefits and more energy efficient buildings. This in turn will have positive benefits for residents, businesses and visitors alike. There are also economic opportunities to be realised in tackling climate change through innovative and technological solutions, such as renewable energy.

Renewable and low carbon energy development can be accommodated in appropriate locations within the natural and built environments in Castlebar, without compromising other important environmental assets or people's quality of life. These developments assist in delivering a more stable and affordable energy supply for homes and businesses, which help communities realise the social and economic benefits of renewable and low carbon energy.

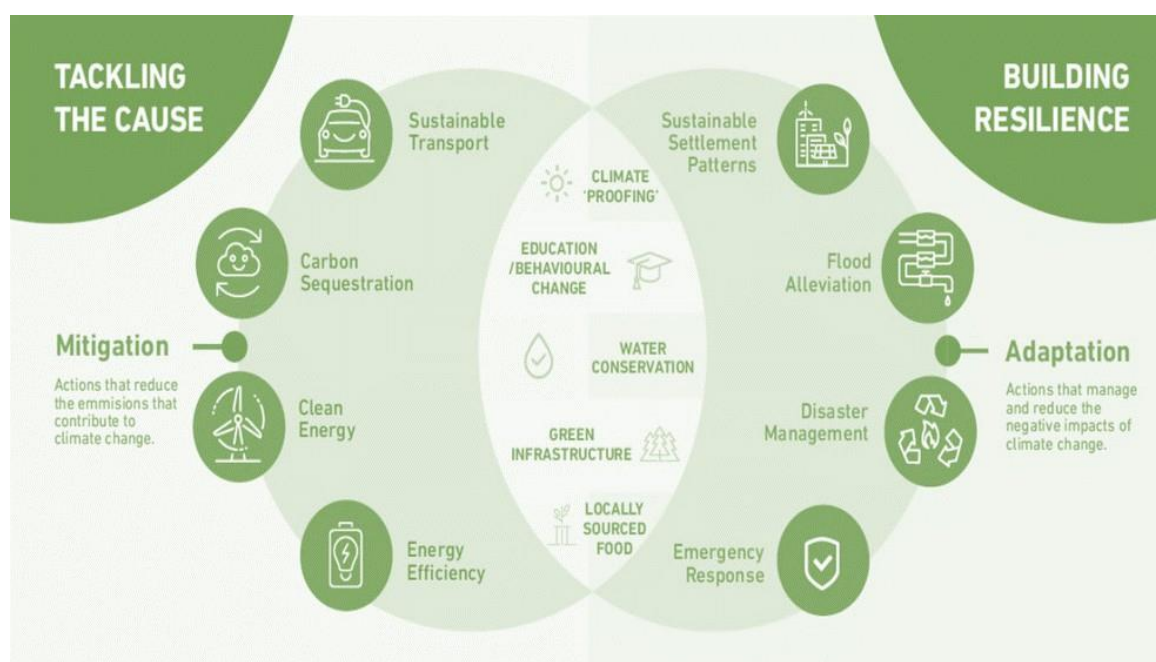


Figure 3.1 – Climate Action Mitigation & Adaptation Measures

3.3 County Position

The Mayo County Development Plan sets out the Mayo’s position on climate change and renewable energy over the plan period. Mayo County Council will develop and implement a climate change screening checklist and guidance document. This will help ensure new developments take account of climate change over the lifetime of a development, in particular with regard site location and layout, building, ventilation and cooling, drainage, water, outdoor spaces and connectivity.

3.3.1 Mayo Climate Adaption Strategy

The Council published their first Climate Adaptation Strategy ‘Climate Ready Mayo’ in September 2019. This strategy sets out a vision and establishes both strategic goals and adaption goals with targeted objectives across five operational goals for Mayo to ensure the County will be climate ready, as set out below in Figure 3.2. Mayo County Council will also be preparing a Climate Action Plan over the plan period, which will also provide a pathway to decarbonise Mayo to meet our 2030 National climate action sectoral targets.



Figure 3.2 – 5 Goals of Mayo’s Climate Adaptation Strategy

3.3.2 Local Initiatives

Public and stakeholder engagement is extremely important in addressing climate change. It is recognised that there is a need to foster and build momentum on wider citizen engagement in climate change, across all age groups. A successful established example of community engagement in this regard is the SEAI’s Sustainable Energy Communities initiative. This initiative assists groups of people to come together to improve how energy is used for the benefit of their community with the common goals of using less energy, using clean, renewable energy and using smart energy.

3.3.3 Castlebar Energy Plan

The Council will support the preparation of an Energy Master Plan (EMP) for Castlebar. This will provide a low carbon roadmap to enable the town to become more energy efficient, use renewable energy, where possible, and use smart energy technology, if appropriate. The EMP will identify current and future energy needs (in electricity, heat and transport) in the town. A greenhouse gas baseline

emissions inventory (BEI) will establish an emissions baseline for Castlebar and estimate the increase in demand for energy, in line with the projected growth of the town's population.

The EMP will include a "Register of Opportunities" for decarbonising projects by local communities that can be implemented over the plan period. Suitable projects may include energy retrofitting of residential and non-residential buildings; a roadmap for electrification of the heat and transport systems; and the identification of viable renewable energy and energy storage projects to help achieve the 51% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions required nationally by 2030.

3.4 Decarbonising Castlebar and Reducing Greenhouse Emissions

The Plan examines the following the main sectors which set Ireland on a pathway to decarbonising the economy:

- Electricity Generation
- Built Environment
- Transport
- Land Use
- Nature Based Solutions

These measures lay the foundations for transitioning Castlebar to a low carbon, climate resilient and environmentally sustainable economy by 2050 and are discussed further below.

3.4.1 Electricity Generation

Renewable energy is a low carbon or zero carbon source of energy produced from sources that are constantly replenished through the cycles of nature. Unlike fossil fuels, these sources of energy are not finite. The development of renewable energy resources and the development of low carbon energies is critical to the transition to a low carbon economy, and to meet climate targets relating the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. The development of renewables, including micro renewables are needed to ensure the security of our energy supply.

The LAP supports the use of micro generation renewable energy technologies. The development of renewable energy infrastructure and initiatives will provide a viable alternative to the burning of fossil fuels. Sources of renewable energy include solar photovoltaic (PV), solar thermal, geothermal, hydroelectric power, renewable gas, green hydrogen, the use of biofuels and onshore and offshore wind turbines. The Council supports and promotes the development of renewable energy technologies most suited to Castlebar at appropriate locations. There is potential for district centre heating opportunities within the town, considering the type and variety of industries that exist, which produce excess heat that could be harnessed and recirculated.

3.4.2 Electric Vehicles (EVs)

Electric vehicle use is growing in Ireland and will undoubtedly form a large part of the transition to a low carbon economy. Range anxiety has been described as a key area of concern for drivers, making it essential that efficient, reliable electric charging infrastructure is available in a range of public locations.

ESB is responsible for the roll out of public electric car charge points in Ireland, whilst private EV charging providers operate publicly accessible chargers on private land. There are currently three charging locations within Castlebar. Mayo County Council are committed to facilitating the expansion of the EV charging point network across the county to ensure greater connectivity and reliability for EV drivers.

The introduction of new regulations for the installation of electric vehicles (EV) recharging infrastructure came into effect in 2021 under the publication of the EU Energy Performance Regulations and will help to encourage supporting infrastructure. These new regulations require the installation of recharging points for EV for both new buildings and existing buildings undergoing major renovations for more than ten car parking spaces. These regulations also require the installation of a minimum number of recharging points for all existing buildings (other than dwellings) with more than twenty car parking spaces by January 01, 2025. The installation of EV recharging infrastructure will support the Climate Action Plan targets of nearly one million EV to be on the road by 2030 and will help to facilitate this transition.

3.4.3 Built Environment

High quality design is fundamental to making places more attractive, sustainable, safe, healthy and accessible. Good design can help reduce and mitigate the impacts of climate change; promote healthier lifestyles; create safer places and make high quality and attractive places that foster civic pride. In well-designed places, water features also form part of an integrated system of landscape, biodiversity and drainage. Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems and Nature Based Solutions can be used to enhance the surrounding environment and provide many additional benefits including attenuation, improvements to biodiversity and habitat, character, amenity and open space.

Proper planning can help increase resilience to the impacts of climate change through the built design, layout and landscape design of development, such as promoting low carbon design approaches to reduce energy consumption in buildings. The Council is committed to ensuring developments and places are designed to deal with the challenge of adapting to and mitigating to Climate Change.

Developers should be proactive in responding to climate change and adopt sustainable and low carbon construction principles in terms of design, layout and density. Sunlight and energy efficiency should be considered as part of the layout, through solar design and natural ventilation systems. Buildings and their surrounding landscapes should be designed to make efficient use of natural resources during construction, operation and maintenance.

3.4.4 Transport

Ireland is targeted to reduce transport related emissions by 50% by 2030. Policy to reduce emissions in the transport sector is focused on both reducing the transport intensity of growth and the carbon intensity of travel. To reduce transport emissions, the Plan seeks to develop Castlebar in a compact fashion, through appropriate zoning, town centre regeneration, application of sustainable densities, the densification of existing residential areas and through enhanced connectivity for active travel and public transport. The Castlebar Local Transport Plan (LTP), which forms an integral part of the Plan, sets out a series of objectives and actions over the plan period to ensure that essential transport

infrastructure will be delivered in line with new development at appropriate locations in the town to facilitate a modal shift towards more sustainable transport options.

3.4.5 Land Use

Settlement patterns, built form, mobility and the mix of land uses in the Castlebar will be key factors in transitioning to a low carbon town, as well as providing a range of other environmental, social, and economic benefits. Planning the town, such that people are enabled to live and work and access facilities by walking and cycling or through the provision of convenient public transport options (bus / rail) will reduce the need to travel by car and the associated carbon emissions. This aligns with the 10-minute town concept, whereby people can access most of their daily needs within 10-minutes on foot or bicycle from where they live. It also aligns with the overall approach set out in the Government’s ‘Housing for All’ plan (2021), which emphasises that compact growth contributes to a low carbon climate resilient society.

Cross-cutting themes engrained throughout the Plan, include compact growth and sustainable travel. The core strategy of the county development plan sets out a sustainable housing strategy in which compact growth, including brownfield redevelopment and urban infill, is a priority in line with the NPF and the RSES.

3.4.6 Waste

National climate action policy emphasises the need to take action to address climate action across all sectors of society and the economy. In the waste sector, policy on climate action is focused on a shift towards a ‘circular economy’ encompassing three core principles: (1) designing out waste and pollution; (2) keeping products and material in use; and (3) regenerating natural systems. The government’s commitment to these principles is underlined by the publication of the Circular Economy Bill 2021. This will provide a national policy framework for Ireland’s transition to a circular economy. It will also seek to implement many of the actions contained in the recently published Waste Action Plan for a Circular Economy, which sets out Ireland’s National Waste Policy for 2020-2025.



Figure 3.3 – The Circular Economy

3.4.7 Nature Based Solutions

Nature-based solutions to adapt to climate change can be deployed through the active management of green and blue Infrastructure. Nature based solutions are defined by the International Union for Conservation of Nature as “actions to protect, sustainably manage, and restore natural or modified ecosystems that address societal challenges effectively and adaptively, simultaneously providing human wellbeing and biodiversity benefits”. Green and blue infrastructure can provide significant environmental benefits including flood water storage, urban cooling and improved air quality. They also have an important role in tackling the biodiversity crisis, sequestration of carbon, absorbing filtering and attenuating water, preventing erosion and filtering pollutants from the air and water. Figure 3.4 below shows how nature-based solutions and other climate friendly measures can be integrated into the built environment.

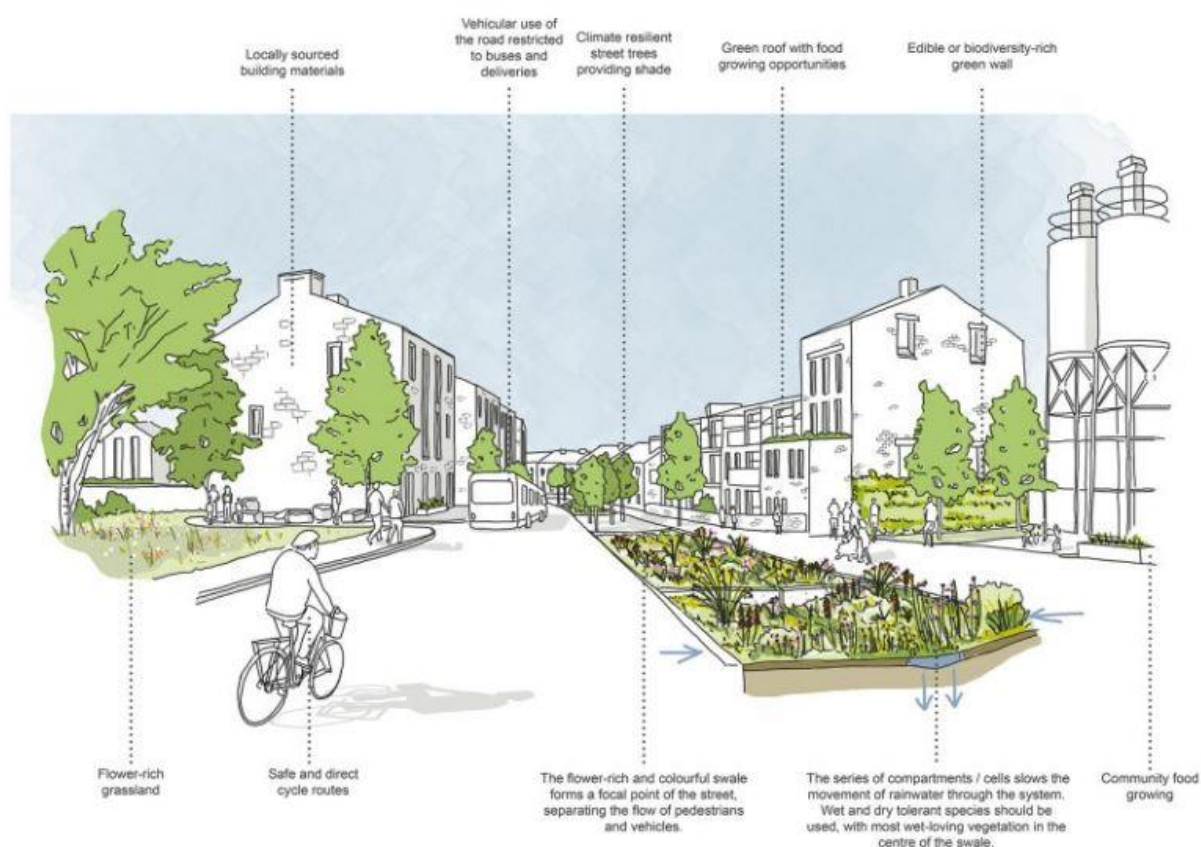


Figure 3.4: Nature-based Solutions (Source: www.landuse.co.uk)

Forests are probably the most familiar nature-based solution for climate change and can contribute both by reducing emission sources and increasing carbon sinks. Other notable examples of Nature based solutions in the built environment include urban greening initiatives such as green roofs or vertical forests. Figure 3.5 below shows the environmental benefits that can be derived from green roofs in an urban context.

3.4.8 Greening of Castlebar

Green spaces in urban areas mitigate the effects of pollution and can reduce a phenomenon known as the urban heat island effect, which refers to heat trapped in built up areas. The urban heat island effect appears in towns and cities as a result of human activity. The heat generated by people,

transport, shops and industry is trapped/absorbed in the narrow roads, dark building materials, courtyards, concrete structures and surfaces, unable to escape to the atmosphere. This can bring the temperature in urban areas up 3-4°C higher than the surrounding countryside.

Increased temperatures in summer leads to an increased demand for cooling. This expands our energy consumption, which in turn intensifies fossil fuel consumption, increasing pollutants in the air and harmful smog on our streets. Hotter pavements also damage the water cycle. In summer, surface temperatures can be significantly higher than the surrounding air, and that heat is transferred to the rainwater that drains into our sewers, which in turn raises water temperatures as it is released into streams, rivers and lakes. This can be destructive to aquatic ecosystems, as changes in water temperature can be stressful or even fatal for marine life.

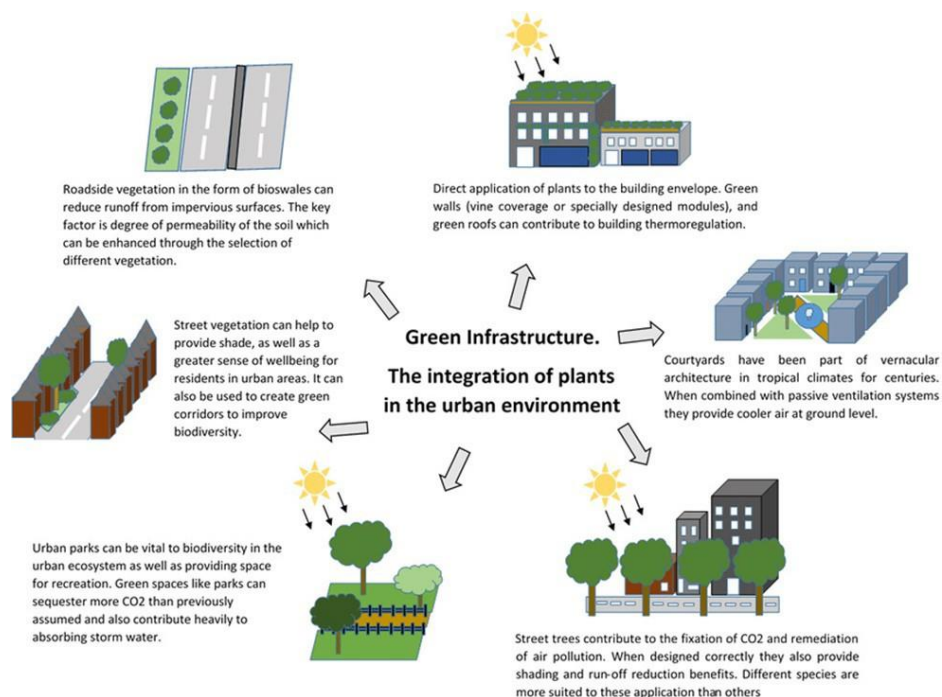


Figure 3.5: Examples of urban green infrastructure and their potential contributions to the health and wellbeing of urban dwellers (Source: <https://www.mdpi.com/journal/buildings>).

Figure 3.5 above shows that vegetation, particularly in the presence of high moisture levels, plays a vital role in the regulation of surface temperatures. There are different ways of reducing the effects of the urban heat island effect. However, a common measure to mitigate urban heat island is to increase urban green spaces such as parks, street trees and green roofs.

Increased soil, plants, tree coverage and other greenery in the built environment, including green roof and walls, would both reduce surface temperature, reducing the energy needed to heat and cool the buildings. Green roofs can also help regulate rainwater, trapping it as it falls and filtering out pollutants.

Tree planting within and around urban areas help reflect solar radiation, while also decreasing the urban heat island effect. Trees provide shade, absorb carbon dioxide, release oxygen and fresh air and provide a cooling effect. Deciduous trees are ideal for urban areas because they cool the area in summer and don't block any warmth during the wintertime.

The introduction of SuDS (Sustainable drainage systems) has a number of benefits including heat reduction through evaporation and flood prevention, particularly during periods of high rainfall when surface water runoff increases in urban areas. SuDS mimic natural drainage by storing, infiltrating and slowing the flow of water. The impervious surface in urban environments has lower infiltration and evaporation than natural environments and greater surface run off.

3.5 Climate Action Policies & Objectives

Climate Action Policies

It is a Policy of the Council to:

CAP 1	<p>Mitigate against the effects of climate change, adapt to its impacts, and to ensure resilience, development proposals should take into account and demonstrate how they are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) promoting sustainable patterns of development including development in sustainable locations; b) promoting the use of energy efficient, micro-generating and decentralised renewable energy systems, including through incorporating sustainable design features and the use of zero carbon technologies; c) promoting the use of zero carbon technologies; d) facilitating sustainable travel by encouraging active travel and travel by public transport in preference to the private car; e) supporting the adaption of existing homes to reduce energy use, including Protected Structures and those located within Architectural Conservation Areas, providing there is no adverse impact on historic character or appearance. f) supporting the delivery of facilities needed to divert waste away from landfill and promote the prevention, reuse, recycling and recovery of materials (including heat from waste) with disposal to landfill as the final option; g) limiting / mitigating the likely greenhouse gas emissions, including through the provision of green infrastructure, and minimising resource and energy requirements through the siting, design and layout of all new development; h) working with natural environmental processes through promoting green infrastructure and the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems / Nature Based Solutions.
CAP 2	<p>Promote and encourage development which is resilient to climate change by ensuring that development proposals demonstrate sustainable design principles for new buildings/ services/site including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) measures such as green roofs and green walls to reduce internal overheating and the urban heat island effect; b) ensuring the efficient use of natural resources (including water) and making the most of natural systems both within and around buildings; c) minimising pollution by reducing surface water runoff through increasing permeable surfaces and use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS); d) reducing flood risk, damage to property from extreme events– residential, public and commercial;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> e) reducing risks from temperature extremes and extreme weather events to critical infrastructure such as roads, communication networks, the water/drainage network, and energy supply; f) promoting and protecting biodiversity and green infrastructure.
CAP 3	<p>Promote low carbon development within the County which will seek to reduce carbon dioxide emissions, and which will meet the highest feasible environmental standards during construction and occupation. New development should generally demonstrate/provide for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Building layout and design which maximises daylight, natural ventilation, active transport and public transport use; b) Sustainable building/services/site design to maximise energy efficiency; c) Sensitive energy efficiency improvements to existing buildings d) Energy efficiency, energy conservation, and the increased use of renewable energy in existing and new developments;
CAP 4	<p>Support a successful transition to a circular economy where waste and resources are minimised in accordance with emerging legislation and national strategy including the Circular Economy Programme 2021-2027, as amended or superseded.</p>
CAP 5	<p>Support the designated and any future Decarbonising Zone (DZ) in Castlebar and associated implementation plan promoting measures to reduce Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions and improve general environmental conditions in this area.</p>
CAP 6	<p>Support Energy Master Plans prepared by Sustainable Energy Communities in Castlebar, in particular, where appropriate, to support the recommendations of the Castlebar Energy Master Plan.</p>
CAP 7	<p>Support and encourage the development of small-scale wind renewable facilities / micro-renewable energy production.</p>
CAP 8	<p>Promote and encourage positive community and/or co-operative led climate action initiatives and projects in Castlebar that seek to reduce carbon emissions, improve energy efficiency, enhance green infrastructure and encourage awareness on climate change issues.</p>
CAP 9	<p>Promote the use of district heating systems in new residential and commercial developments where such development does not have a negative impact on the surrounding environment, landscape, biodiversity or local amenities.</p>
CAP 10	<p>Support the development of sustainable low-carbon climate resilient communities and encourage a climate adaptation and mitigation approach to developments which will enable regeneration.</p>
CAP 11	<p>Encourage innovation and facilitate the development of pilot schemes in Castlebar that support climate change mitigation and adaptation measures.</p>

Climate Action Objectives

It is an Objective of the Council to:

CAO 1	Ensure all development proposals shall have regard to the Mayo Climate Change Adaptation Strategy (2019) and the associated SEA and NIS Environmental Reports, any revised or forthcoming adaptation, mitigation or climate action strategies in the formulation of any plans and when assessing planning application for future developments.
CAO 2	Consider a variation of the development plan within a reasonable period of time, or to include such other mechanism, as may be appropriate, to ensure that the development plan will be consistent with the approach to climate action recommended in the revised Local Area Plan Guidelines when adopted or any other relevant guidelines.
CAO 3	Promote the use of smart climate change, energy and carbon off-setting solutions in new developments. In the cases of large industrial, commercial or newly constructed public buildings, the incorporation of renewable technologies, such as solar energy in the design will be encouraged, subject to compliance with all relevant planning criteria. The Council encourages the NZEB standard of building or equivalent for all new development and the use of blue and green infrastructure as a mechanism for surface water management and improving public realm.
CAO 4	Support high levels of energy conservation, energy efficiency and the use of renewable energy sources in existing buildings, including retro-fitting of appropriate energy efficiency measures in the existing building stock, and to actively retrofit Mayo County Council's housing stock to a B2 Building Energy Rating (BER) in line with the Government's Housing for All Plan retrofit targets for 2030.
CAO 5	<p>Have regard to Goal 3 of the Mayo Climate Change Adaptation Strategy 2019-2024:</p> <p>Increase the Resilience of Natural and Cultural Capital:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Build awareness of Nature Based Adaptation Solutions and Green Infrastructure. 2. Support bio-diversity for its intrinsic value within the natural environment and its importance in climate change adaptation. 3. Develop a database of impacts of climate change on Mayo's Natural Environment. 4. Identify Cultural and Heritage Sites vulnerable to climate change and develop adaptation and management policies. 5. Encourage adaptation in Agriculture and Local Food Supply

Chapter 4 TOWN CENTRE REGENERATION STRATEGY

4.1 Strategic Aims

- *To develop a robust and design led urban regeneration and development strategy; to maximise the strengths of the town; to promote sustainable movement.*
- *To integrate new and regenerated areas within the historic core in a contemporary manner that complements the existing urban structure and heritage of the town.*
- *To create an integrated and commercially robust, liveable and sustainable town.*
- *To ensure that best practice urban design principles are applied to all new development, based on the principle that well planned and integrated development enhances the sustainability, attractiveness and liveability of an area.*

4.2 Introduction

To realise the strategic vision for Castlebar and fulfil its regional role as a Key Town, in tandem with Westport, the plan places a strong focus on sustainable compact growth, with particular emphasis on the regeneration and repopulation of core and built-up areas. This approach focuses on maximising the use of infill, vacant and underutilised sites and of buildings that are suitable and capable of reuse to provide housing, jobs, services and amenities. There are many regeneration opportunities in the Castlebar town centre. National funding schemes are available to assist local authorities and communities to address urban decay, dereliction, vacancy, and re-use of buildings to make town centres attractive, vibrant, and desirable places to live, work, visit and invest. National policy documents such as 'Town Centre First' (2022) provide a roadmap to support towns and their communities to design, deliver and implement a plan that can reimagine each town. This chapter identifies core regeneration areas in Castlebar town centre for transformational regeneration, which will enhance the vitality and vibrancy of the town centre.

4.3 The Urban Structure of Castlebar

4.3.1 Town Centre Analysis

The urban structure of Castlebar's town centre is generally well defined. The majority of Castlebar's archaeological, cultural and historic heritage assets are located within the town centre and significantly contribute to its character and form. The central spine of the historic core area is traditionally lined with two and three storey buildings defining the main streets. These buildings generally date from the turn of the 20th Century. The traditional urban forms of that time prevail at present.

For the most part, the facades running through the centre of Castlebar are well maintained and are visually attractive. Though, in recent times, increased number of vacant and derelict former commercial and residential properties in the core area have detracted from the aesthetic enjoyment and character of the urban structure. Several of the streetscapes in the town benefit from the existence of strong, clearly defined edges. However, in some instances, the approaches to these well-

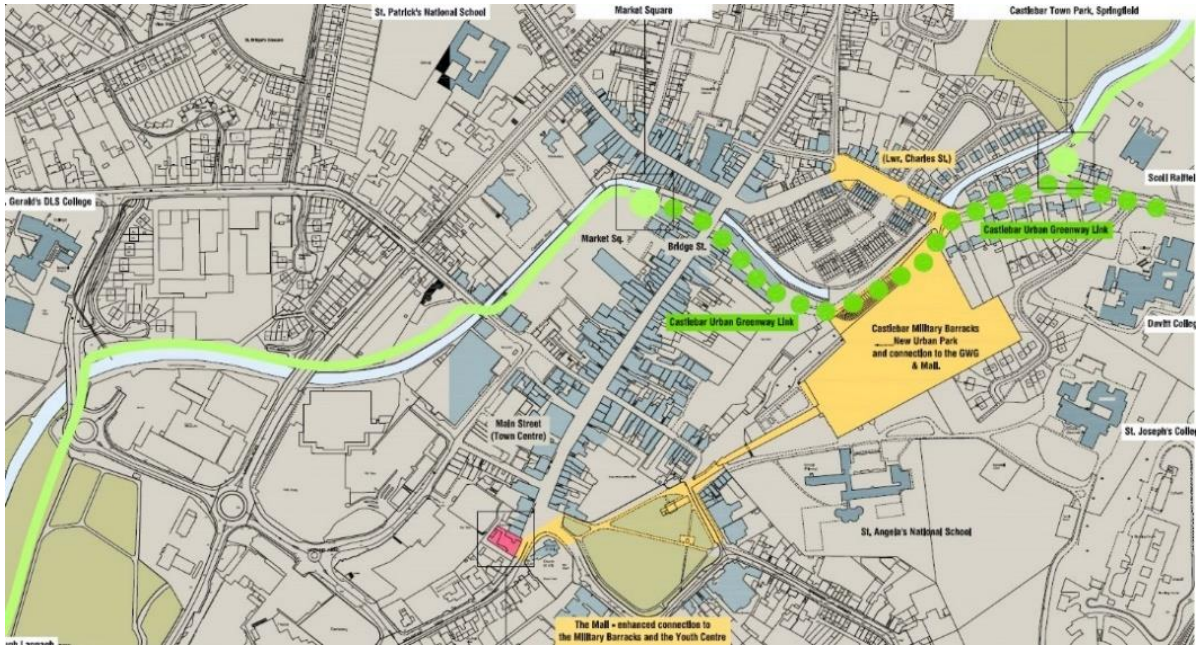
structured streetscapes are poorly defined and have a negative impact on the visitor's first impression of the town. These areas would greatly benefit from a structured urban design approach for their redevelopment.

4.3.2 Areas in need of regeneration

In common with many urban centres of a similar size towns across Ireland, the core of Castlebar has become depopulated and underutilised in areas, with increased numbers of derelict and vacant buildings, brownfield sites and underdeveloped back lands. There has also been a shift from the centre of activity associated with the traditional retail core of the town, comprising of the Market Street and Bridge Street areas, and some adjoining secondary streets, to a new area to the west and southwest of the town centre. This shift has had adverse impacts on the traditional town centre area from an aesthetic and economic perspective due to an increased vacancy rate of 20.5% (Geodirectory Q2 of 2022).

National and regional planning policy now seeks to counteract the increased depopulation, vacancy, urban decay and dereliction of town centres by creating more attractive compact environments, with opportunities for people to live, work and invest in town centre areas. More visually attractive and accessible town centres will contribute to the vibrancy of traditional urban core areas and encourage a shift to more active forms of travel, thereby reducing greenhouse gases. Opportunities exist in Castlebar to rejuvenate the town centre by building on the significant public realm regeneration works carried out by (the former) Castlebar Town Council, in conjunction with Mayo County Council. This work focused on core, streets, public amenities, urban spaces and public parks enhancements within the town.

Mayo County Council have been successful in securing funding under the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund (URDF) for several transformational regeneration projects in the town centre, including the Castlebar Historic Core Reactivation Initiative Project; the Castlebar Military Barracks Project; and the Castlebar Urban Greenway Link (see Figure below). The realisation of these projects will be the catalyst for transformational change for Castlebar. Additional targeted regeneration projects will also be required over the plan period, as set out in this chapter, and beyond to further consolidate and revitalise the core area. Section 4.5 of the Plan identifies specific areas within the town centre for targeted regeneration and redevelopment.



Map 4.1: Approved projects under the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund (URDF)



Photo 4.1: Redevelopment of the Former Castlebar Post Office to serve as a Community Youth Support Centre



Map 4.2: Castlebar Urban Greenway Link

4.4 Urban Development Strategy

4.5.1 Urban Development Strategy for Castlebar

This Plan seeks to build on the principles previously contained in the Castlebar Town & Environs Development Plan (2008-14) which sought to consolidate the overall growth of Castlebar. The strategic vision for Castlebar as set out in this Plan, along with new and emerging planning policy at National and Regional levels provide a much greater level of focus in directing and shaping the future growth of the town and as such the main principles guiding the physical development of the town is based on the following:

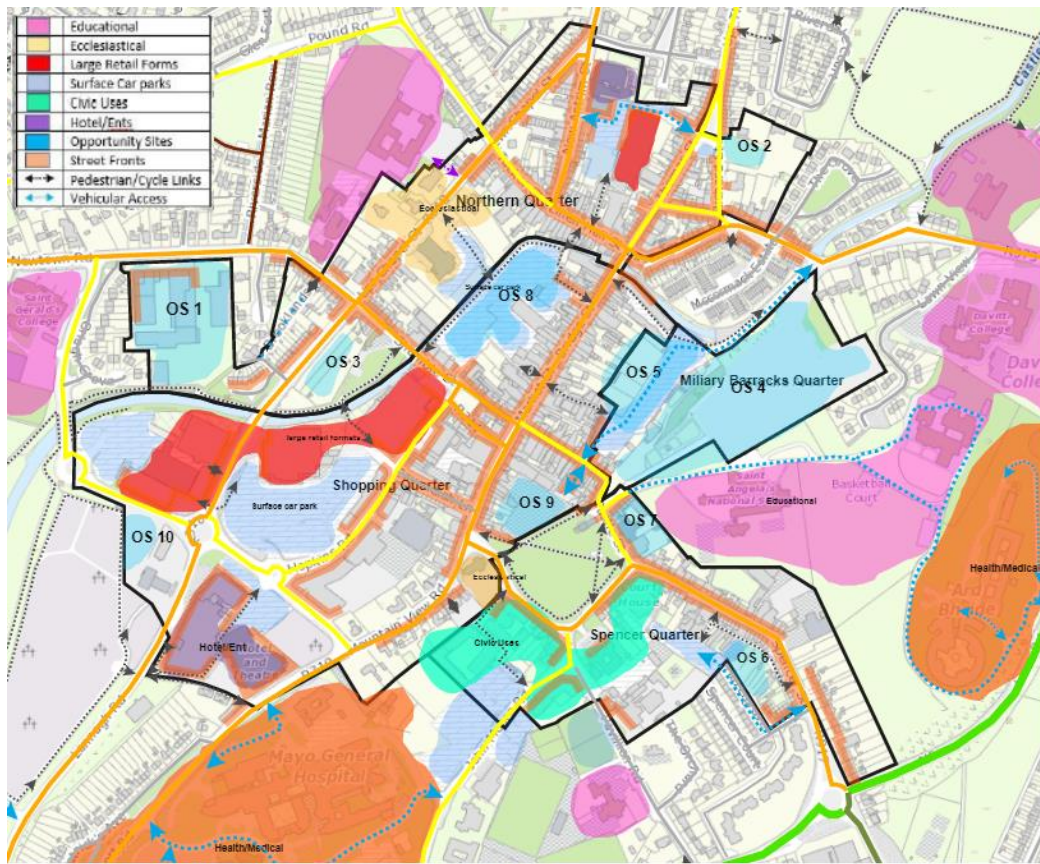
- Continued focus on consolidation of the urban form through infill development within the defined built-up area of the town and at a suitable scale / density.
- Emphasis on plan led development with a particular focus on town centre regeneration
- Recognition of the town centre as being the primary area of retail activity in Castlebar.
- Identification of key areas for economic development within the plan area, in addition to the core town centre (where further economic potential exists).
- Understanding of the need to deliver new and improved connections through the provision of a high-quality public realm along with a focus on sustainable movement. These connections will help link the town centre with surrounding residential areas, the periphery, and the wider hinterland of the town.
- Identification and utilisation of historic and natural assets to provide for new and enhanced tourism and recreational activities.

4.5 Regeneration Strategy

4.5.1 Overview

The purpose of the strategy is to set out a development framework, in order to guide the consolidation and rejuvenation of the commercial core of Castlebar; assist in creating revitalised town centre streets and public spaces; to facilitate and provide for the development and improvement of appropriate town centre uses including retail, residential, cultural and community uses with an overall aim to enhance the vitality, viability and attractiveness of Castlebar as a destination to live, work, do business and visit.

Castlebar town centre has faced challenges over recent years, in particular the underperformance of the commercial core area reaching its full potential as a multi activity and multi-use area at the heart of a growing urban settlement. To create a strategy for the future development of the town centre area, land use and occupancy surveys were conducted. The surveys also examined existing built form, potential future permeability linkages and physical constraints. Based on the surveys and analysis, four-character areas were identified in the town centre. Map 4.3 below shows the opportunity sites for regeneration within each character area, which seeks to build on the strengths of the town centre; its architectural, archaeological and natural heritage; urban spaces; and civic, cultural and commercial amenities.



Map 4.3 – Town Centre Conceptual Map

4.5.2 Regeneration Strategy Approach

Four-character areas are identified within the commercial core area (see **Map 4.4** below), The Northern Quarter, The Military Barracks Quarter, The Spencer Quarter and the Shopping Quarter, based on distinctive character; unique challenges & opportunities; and the potential contribution they each can make to the future development of the town centre. It is envisaged, that each core area will act as catalysts for change within the town core.

Opportunity Sites have been identified in each character area. Mayo County Council encourage the development of Opportunity Sites in Castlebar for a mixture of uses that will contribute to the regeneration, vibrancy, diversity, vitality, attractiveness, safety, liveability and compact growth of the town centre. In addition, proposals must demonstrate how they will interact within its context and the wider urban. Development proposal on Opportunity Sites will require developers to prepare urban design framework(s)/masterplan(s) to inform their future development. To guide urban design framework(s)/masterplan(s), Section 11.3 of the Plan set out urban design principles. Proposals must also comply with national guidelines (as appropriate) towards achieving sustainable compact development and to integrate principles of good urban design and placemaking.

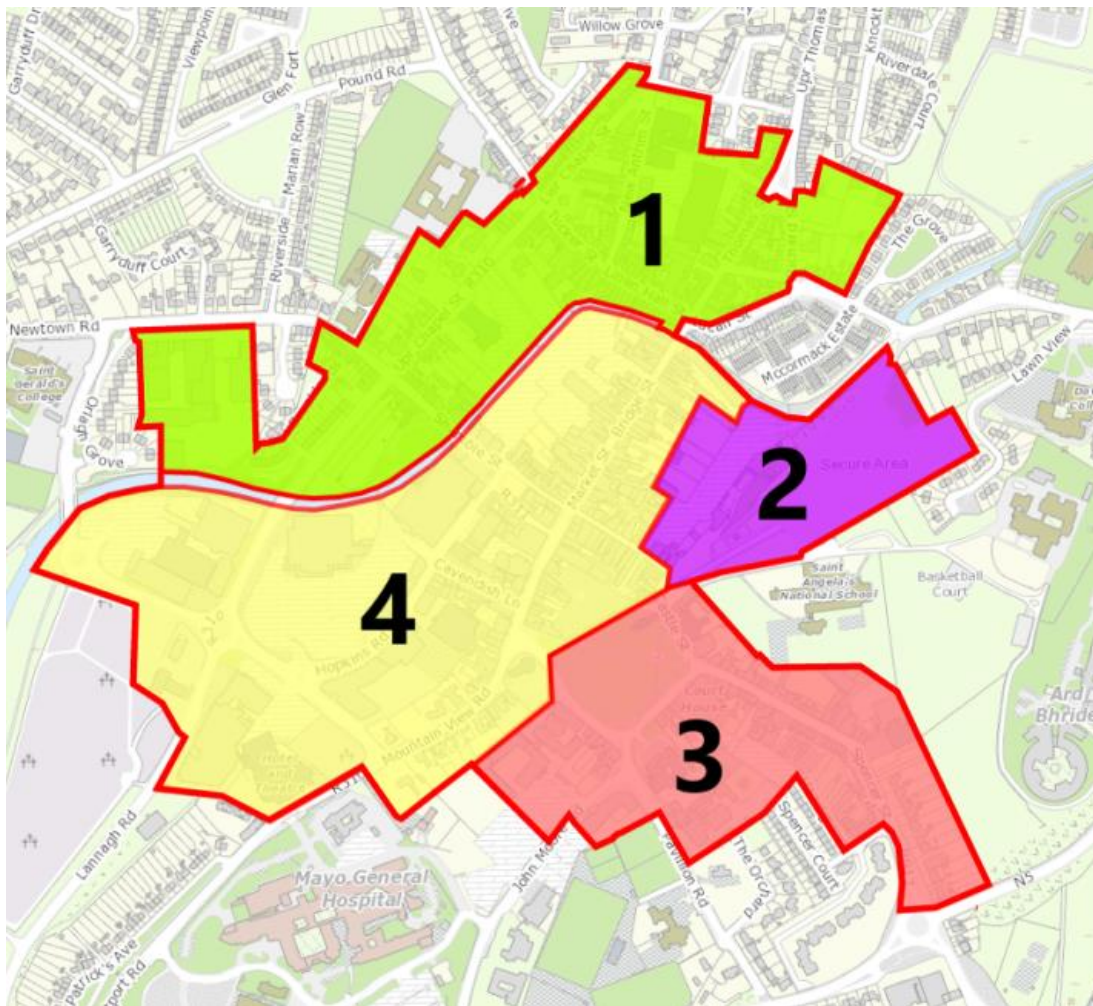
Short-term and long term aims

- **Short-term:** The short-term vision for the Character Areas seeks to pursue the upgrading of the public realm, identify key connections and to set out desirable uses within each character area.
- **Medium/Long-term:** The medium to longer term vision is to facilitate regeneration by the adaptive re-use of existing buildings, sensitive infill of vacant sites and the creation of new urban form.

Placemaking:

All development will be centred on the concept of placemaking with the aim of enhancing the character and spatial qualities of each area. The framework for each regeneration area will therefore seek to:

- Identify the main issues and challenges affecting the area.
- Develop a coherent identity for the regeneration area based on its unique character, attributes and assets,
- Define the role that the area will play in the future development of the town centre.
- Outline the spatial opportunities and urban design solutions, which would assist in the development of such an envisaged role.



Map 4.4 - Character Areas within the Town Centre

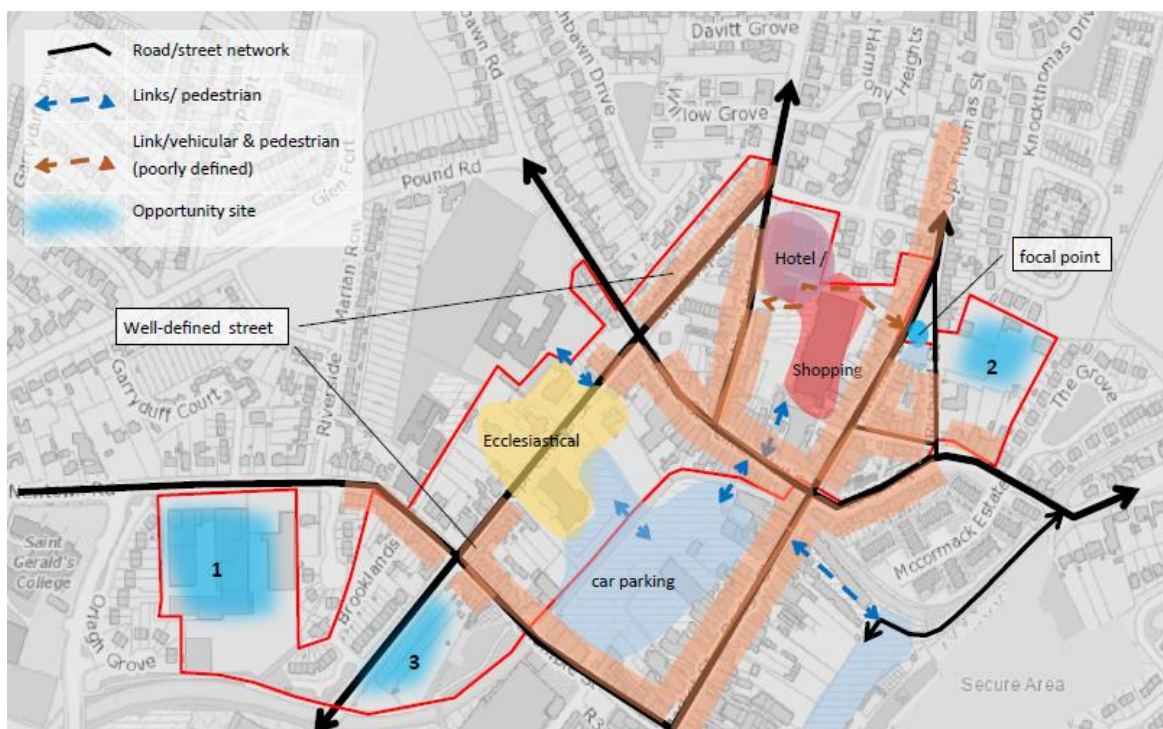
4.6 Character Areas & Opportunity Sites:

4.6.1 The Northern Quarter

The northern quarter extends from the old Hat Factory/Ford site on Newtown road north-eastwards along Upper & Lower Chapel Street. The area also takes a cluster of smaller streets comprised of Tucker St, New Antrim St, Linenhall St, Thomas St, Richard St and Lucan St.



Map 4.5 – Northern Quarter Context



Map 4.6 - Spatial Parameters of Northern Quarter

Opportunity Site 1 – The Hat Factory

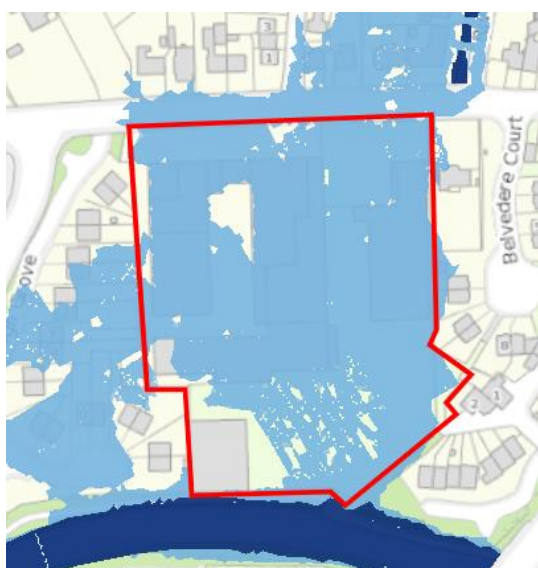
Opportunity Site 1:



Map HF1 – Site Location



Map HF2 – Aerial Image of site



Map HF3 – Flood Extent

Area: 1.83 Hectares (approx.)

Description: Opportunity Site 1, locally referred to as The Old Hat Factory /Ford garage site, is located along Newtown Rd and contains several buildings/structures. It would appear that most of the old factory buildings are vacant, with only a few commercial units along the main road operational. The majority of the site is under Flood Zone B due to issues surrounding a culvert to the north-east of the site near Marion Row (see Map HF3).

Potential: The location of the site along Newtown Rd provides potential for a logical extension of the town centre, including the provision of active street frontage (at ground level) with accommodation above. Given the size of this brownfield site, and its proximity to both residential areas and the commercial core, there is potential for residential purposes to further contribute to the rejuvenation and revitalisation close to and within the town centre subject to Flooding Guidelines.

Limited retail which does not impact negatively on the vitality and vibrancy of the Inner Town Centre (Retail) Core may be considered.

- Residential
- Offices
- Commercial
- Mixed-Use



Photo 4.1 – Opportunity Site 1 (Hat Factory)



Photo 4.2 – Opportunity Site 1 (Hat Factory)

Opportunity Site – Richard Street

Opportunity Site 2:



Map RS1 - Site Location



Map RS2 – Aerial image of site

Area: 0.30 Hectares (approx.)

Description: Opportunity Site 2 is located off Richard St, to the north east of the established town core area, adjacent to the ESB Networks storage compound.

Potential: The site is an infill site, with potential for both town centre and residential uses. The area forms part of a fine-grained streetscape, which is comprised of a mix of residential, service, commercial and retail formats. The development of this site has potential to contribute to the revitalisation of underutilised lands within the town centre area. The site holds potential for the infill/creation of continued street frontage, with additional scope available for the development of the backlands which runs parallel to established development along Richard St. The site if developed could lead to redeveloping the adjoining ESB compound (see outlined in blue in Map RS1).

Potential Uses:

- Residential
- Offices
- Mixed-Use



Photo 4.3 – Opportunity Site (Richard Street)

Opportunity Site 3 – Lannagh Road

Opportunity Site 3:



Map LR1 – Site Location



Map LR2 – Aerial Image of Site



Map LR3 – Flood Extent

Area: 0.40 Hectares (approx.)

Description: Opportunity Site 3 is located immediately east of Lannagh Rd, on the northern bank of the Castlebar River. These lands consist of undeveloped backlands to the rear of properties along Shamble Street. A proportion of the of the site is under Flood Zone A & B as shown in Map LR3.

Potential: The site is an infill site, with potential for town centre uses at this location. This site has potential for dual aspect with active frontage along Lannagh Rd and also facing the river & urban greenway that runs along its southern perimeter. Considering its location, it could thrive as a public amenity space/park.

Limited retail which does not impact negatively on the vitality and vibrancy of the Inner Town Centre (Retail) Core may be considered.

Potential Uses:

- Residential
- Offices
- Institutional
- Medical
- Employment
- Recreational
- Public Park
- Mixed-Use

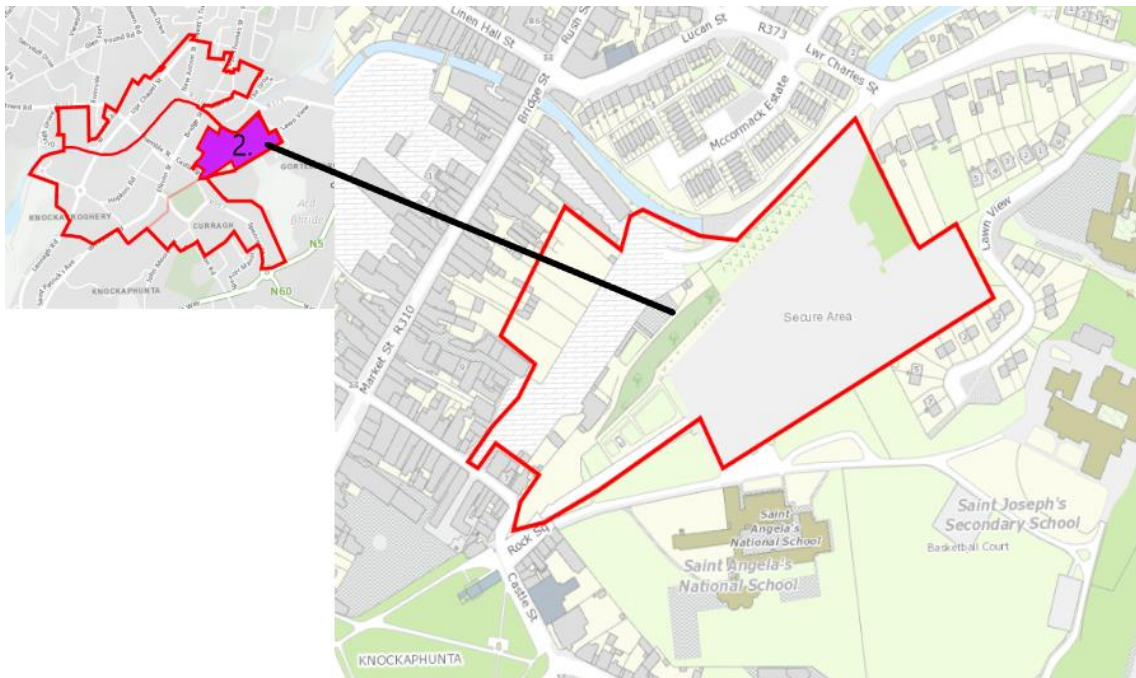


Photo 4.4 – Opportunity Site (Lannagh Road)

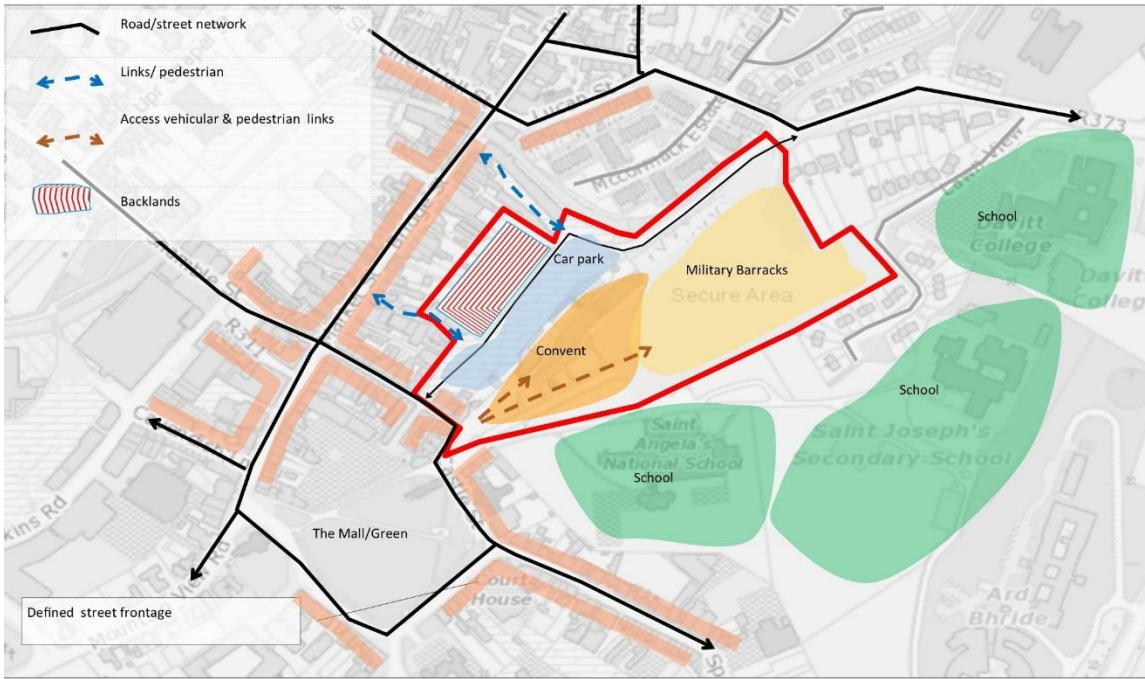
Proposals for development on all opportunity sites shall be accompanied by a site brief and should comply with national guidelines (as appropriate) towards achieving sustainable compact development and to integrate principles of good urban design and placemaking.

4.6.2 Military Barracks Quarter

The Military Barracks Quarter includes backlands to the rear of Main Street, Castle Street carpark, Rock Square, as well as the former Military Barracks complex and Convent sites.



Map 4.7 – Military Barracks Quarter context



Map 4.8 - Spatial Parameters of Military Barracks Quarter

The Military Barracks Quarter is a particularly important regeneration site within the town core. The entire site is considered to be a transformative opportunity for the town centre. The area is divided into two opportunity sites based on the two distinctive aspects of the area: the redevelopment of the Military Barracks building and adjoining complex (including former Convent site); and the redevelopment of the backlands area of Main Street.

Opportunity Site 4 – Military Barracks

<p>Opportunity Site 4:</p> <p>Map MB1 – Site Location.</p>	<p>Area: 3.68 Hectares (approx.)</p> <p>Description: Opportunity Site 4 is comprised of the old Military Barracks / Former Convent.</p> <p>Potential: The Military Barracks has significant potential as a catalyst for re-energising the centre of Castlebar. Underpinning ambitions for the project are the development of highest quality public-realm spaces, connectedness, relevance, civic value, economic value, innovation and transformational place-making. Through a mix of commercial, community and civic uses the project will provide an anchor for the regeneration of Castlebar.</p> <p>Potential Uses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residential • Offices • Cultural • Institutional
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Map MB2 – Aerial image of site

- Employment
- Educational
- Mixed-Use



Photo 4.5 – Opportunity Site 4 (Military Barracks)

Opportunity Site 5 – Backlands at Castle Street Car Park

Opportunity Site 5:



Map CS1 – Site Location

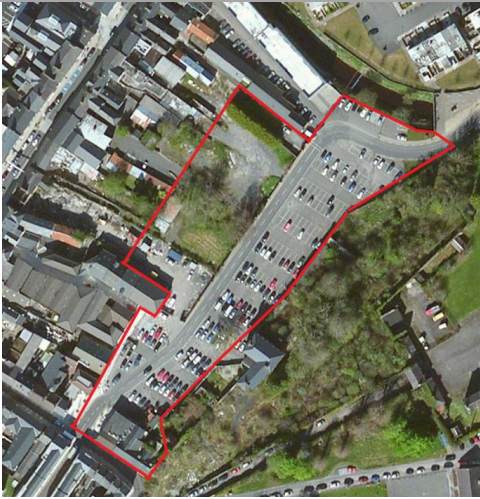
Area: 1.32 Hectares (approx.)

Description: Opportunity Site 5 includes a portion of backlands to the rear of Market / Bridge St adjoining the Castle St carpark. The urban greenway link traverses the northern boundary of the site.

Potential: Creation of a new streetscape and meaningful sustainable linkages through redevelopment of vacant/underutilised backlands and opportunities for the creation of a civic space and improved public realm.

Redevelopment of this area will provide an important interface between the Central Spins shopping areas and the Military Barracks to form a new dynamic place within the town centre.

Potential Uses:



- Residential
- Offices
- Public Realm
- Employment
- Commercial

Map CS2 – Aerial image of site



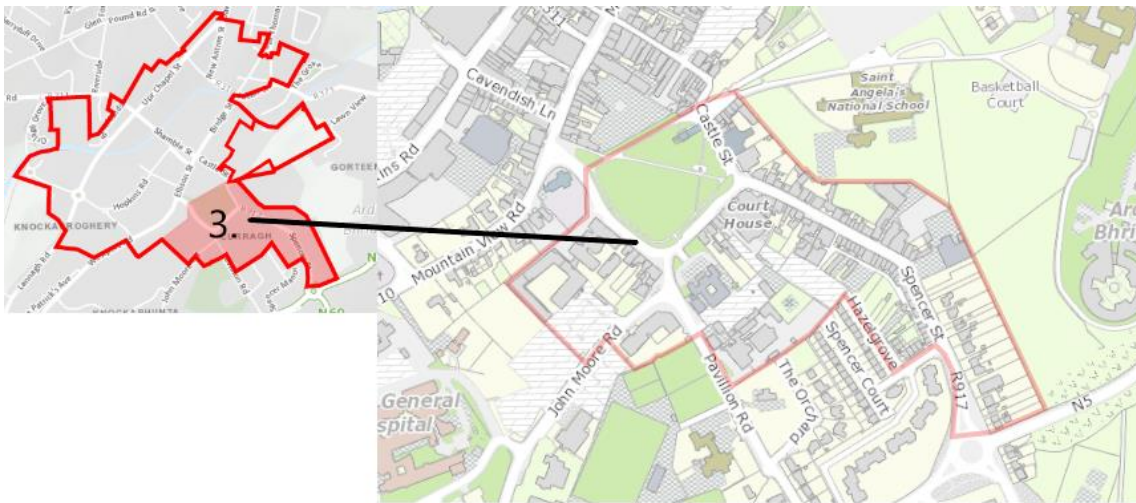
Photo 4.6 – Opportunity Site 5 (Backlands Castle Street)

Proposals for development on all opportunity sites shall be accompanied by a site brief and should comply with national guidelines (as appropriate) towards achieving sustainable compact development and to integrate principles of good urban design and placemaking.

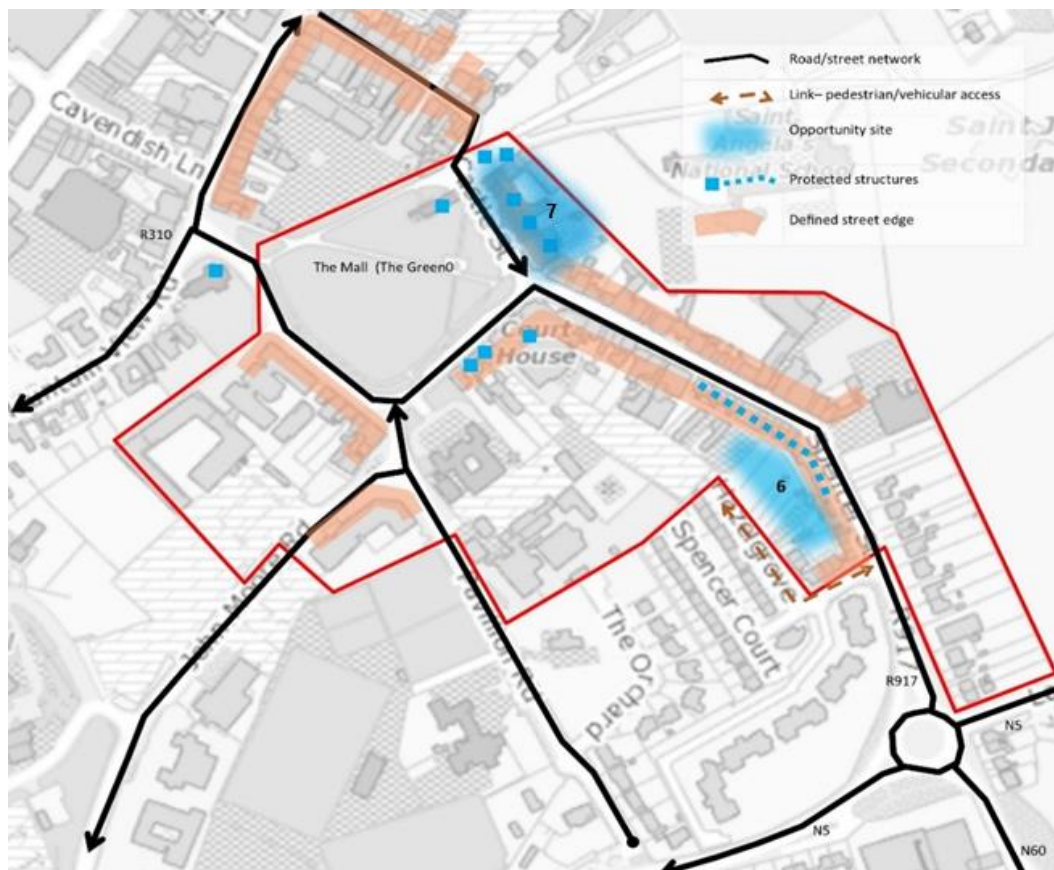
4.6.3 Spencer Quarter

The Spencer Quarter is situated at the southern edge of the town centre in a prominent location between the junction of N5 and the N60 to the south, and to the rear of Ellison/Main Street to the North. The quarter contains a mix of commercial/administrative/justice/medical/services and residential. The area contains the Green (The Mall) as well as Spencer Street, Spencer Court, Humbert Way, Lawn Rd, John Moore Road. This area also has a rich history which is reflected in a wealth of built

heritage. The area has 22 protected structures and 11 building listed on the NIAH register. There is some vacancy along the street, both in older buildings and newer built retail units. The quarter also contains notable buildings such as the Former Imperial Hotel.



Map 4.9 - Spencer Quarter context



Map 4.10 - Spatial Parameters of Spencer Quarter

Opportunity Site 6 – Hazel Grove

Opportunity Site 6:



Map HG1 – Site Location



Map HG2 – Aerial image of site

Area: 0.33 Hectares (Approx.)

Description: Opportunity Site 6 consists of a portion of backlands to the rear of Spencer St, on the eastern side of the Hazel Grove development. The area identified contains large swathes undeveloped/underutilised land. There is an existing access road to carpark, with an established pedestrian access (via laneway) from the car park to Spencer street.

Potential: Creation of a new streetscape along Hazel Grove and to create new improved permeable and legible corridors within the urban street/ footpath network.

Potential Uses:

- Residential
- Offices
- Mixed-Use



Photos 4.7 – Opportunity Site (Hazel Grove)

Opportunity Site 7 – The Mall/Rock Square

Opportunity Site 7:



Map MRS 1 – Site Location



Map MRS 2 – Aerial image of site

Area: 0.33 Hectares (Approx.)

Description: Opportunity Site 7 consists of the Former Imperial Hotel, the Motor Tax offices, vacant/underutilised buildings fronting the Mall and Rock Square.

Potential: Revitalise and rejuvenate the north-eastern side of the Mall which consists of many vacant and underutilised historic buildings fronting the Mall and the Rock Square.

Owing to its location on The Mall and a potential The Mall ACA, particular attention would be required in terms of scale and design solutions.

Potential Uses:

- Residential
- Offices
- Mixed-Uses
- Hospitality
- Public Realm
- Mixed-Use



Photo 4.8 – Opportunity Site (Former Imperial Hotel / Motor Tax office)

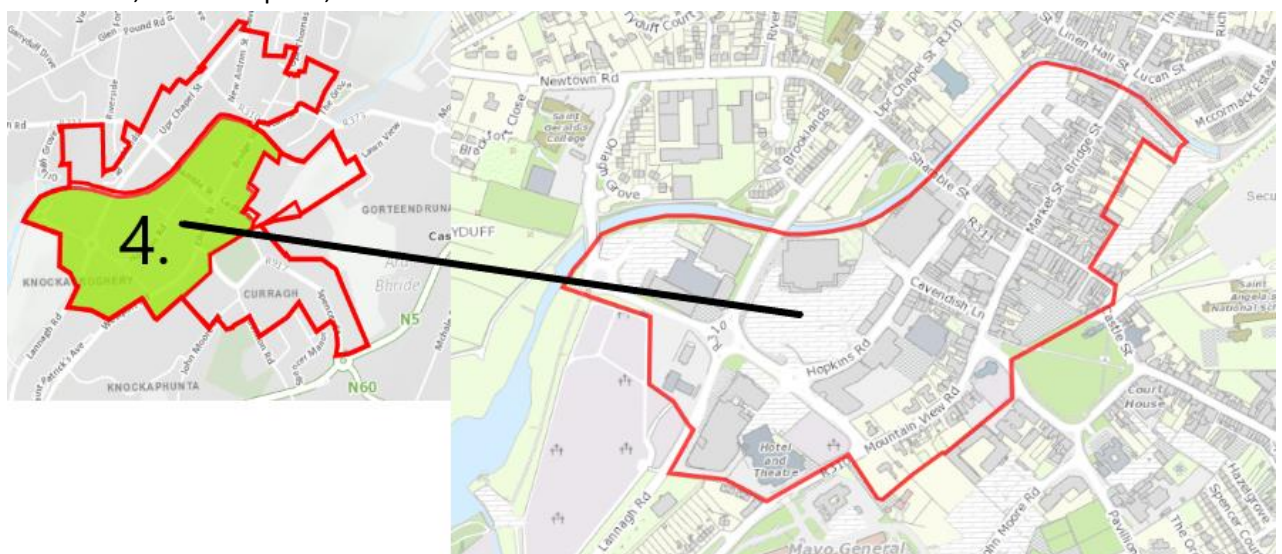


Photo 4.9 – Opportunity Site (Former Imperial Hotel / Motor Tax office)

Proposals for development on all opportunity sites shall be accompanied by a site brief and should comply with national guidelines (as appropriate) towards achieving sustainable compact development and to integrate principles of good urban design and placemaking.

4.6.4 Shopping Quarter

The Shopping Quarter is the core heartland of the Castlebar town centre. The quarter is home to the historic retail/ commercial core of Castlebar and is a major focal point of the town. The area extends from Bridge Street in the north to Mountain View Road to the south and from Castle St to Hopkins Rd. The retail core expanded in recent times along Hopkins Road which contains large retail chains and mixed-use developments, as well as a range of commercial/retail/ hotel & theatre/ medical/services, residential; and a number of large surface carparks. Streets within this zone contain – Bridge Street, Main Street, Castle Street, Hopkins Road, Ellison Street, Shambles Street, Mountain View Road, Market Square, and a section of the R310.



Map 4.11 – Shopping Quarter context



Map 4.12 - Spatial Parameters of Shopping Quarter

Opportunity Site 8 – Backlands at Mill Lane

Opportunity Site 8:



Map ML1 – Site Location

Area: 1.2 Hectares (Approx.)

Description: Opportunity site 8 is located to the rear of the Central Spine shopping area within the current Mill Lane carpark area and adjoins the church grounds. The Castlebar River runs along the western and northern boundaries of the Opportunity Site, the flood extend of the river touches the boundary (see Map ML3).

Potential: Create new streetscape to rear of Main Street along the River corridor incorporating the urban greenway link and other urban linkages between the church grounds, the parking area and the surrounding primary streets.

Potential Uses:

- Residential
- Offices
- Public Realm
- Enterprise & Employment
- Medical/Health
- Mixed-Use



Map ML2 – Aerial image of Site.



Map ML3 – Flood Extent



Photo 4.10 – Opportunity Site 8 (Mill Lane Car Park Backlands)

In addition to the aforementioned specific projects, it is considered the general area would benefit greatly from supporting transformational public realm initiatives to bring underperforming/backlands areas into active use and integrate with the public realm network of the wider area.

The following would support the further development of this town centre location:

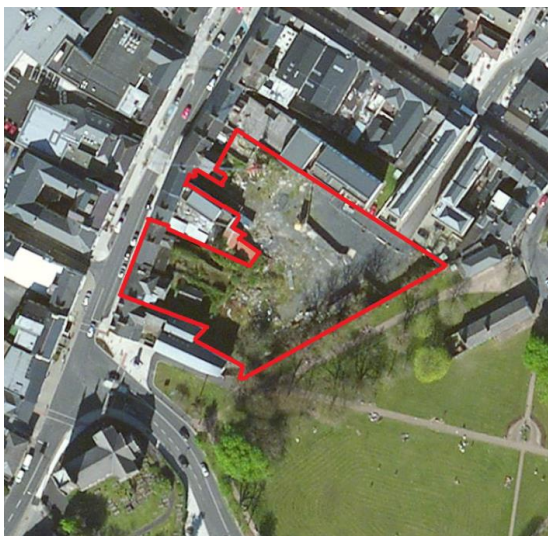
- **Public realm improvement:** public realm development/enhancement schemes.
- **Enhanced amenity spaces:** Ongoing enhancement of recreational spaces and attractiveness from a cultural and community perspective will serve this area in achieving its vision as a busy, vibrant place to live and work within the town centre.
- **Conservation of the built heritage:** Conserving, managing and presenting our built heritage for its intrinsic value while also providing scope for town centre uses and important community services will serve to provide an enriched, liveable place. Projects and initiatives that support appropriate adaptive uses in tandem with conservations requirements are encouraged.
- **Access:** this general area would benefit in the creation of improved access (pedestrian & cyclist) to the quality amenity/recreational park/facility of the area. Such project would require sensitivity to the built heritage and character of the area, with a strong emphasis on conservation, which would allow protection and preservation of sensitive environments while also providing a wellbeing for all.

Opportunity Site 9 – The Mall/Ellison Street

Opportunity Site 9:



Map ME1 – Site Location



Map ME2 – Aerial image of site.

Area: 0.45 Hectares (Approx.)

Description: Opportunity site 9 is located to the rear of properties along Ellison Street, and adjoins The Green (The Mall). There is a history of planning applications on the site but none have materialised. The site is dominated by an abandoned yellow cement silo centrally located within the site. The site has vehicular access points from Castle Street and Ellison Street

Potential: Create new development that has potential for higher densities and taller buildings.

Owing to its location proximate to The Mall and a potential The Mall ACA, particular attention would be required in terms of scale and design solutions.

Potential Uses:

- Residential
- Offices
- Commercial
- Mixed-Use



Photo 4.11 – Opportunity Site 9 (The Mall)



Photo 4.12 – Opportunity Site 9 (Lands between The Mall & Ellison Street)

Opportunity Site 10 – Adjacent McDonalds

<p>Opportunity Site 10:</p>	<p>Area: 0.22 Hectares (approx.)</p> <p>Description: Opportunity site 10 is located along the Hopkins Rd link road, to the rear of McDonalds and Casey’s petrol station. The site is enclosed on all sides by fencing and contains no structures, the site can be accessed from the north and the south.</p>
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Map MCD 1 – Site Location



Map MCD 2 – Aerial image of site

Potential: The site is located in one of the busiest thoroughfares in Castlebar and is provides an opportunity to have active street frontage to the north.

Limited retail which does not impact negatively on the vitality and vibrancy of the Inner Town Centre (Retail) Core may be considered.

Potential Uses:

- Residential
- Offices
- Commercial
- Mixed-Use



Photo 4.13 – Opportunity Site 10 (Adjacent McDonalds)

Proposals for development on all opportunity sites shall be accompanied by a site brief and should comply with national guidelines (as appropriate) towards achieving sustainable compact development and to integrate principles of good urban design and placemaking.

4.7 Town Centre & Regeneration Policy & Objectives

Town Centre Policy	
It is the Policy of the Council to:	
TCP 1	Ensure that new development in the town centre and in particular the opportunity areas comprises the highest of qualitative and design standards, complimenting the existing historical built fabric, or natural heritage, sustaining Castlebar as a town in which to live, work, invest in and do business.
TCP 2	Seek to develop and improve areas within the town that are in need of regeneration, renewal and redevelopment. The Council will seek to apply, where appropriate, the provisions of the Urban Regeneration and Housing Act, Derelict Sites Act, and use Compulsory Purchase Orders and other active land management instruments, as appropriate, to facilitate regeneration, housing supply, employment opportunities and community facilities.
TCP 3	Protect the visual character, built & cultural heritage, ambience and vitality of the traditional heart of the town centre in order to meet the retailing and service needs of the area, in addition to offering a pleasant and attractive environment for shopping, business, tourism, recreation and living.
TCP 4	Actively encourage, support and facilitate environmental and public realm improvements in Castlebar to address environmental quality, urban design, safety, identity and traffic impact.
TCP 5	Support the development of the further public realm projects in Castlebar that will enhance the aesthetics of the town's built and natural character and improve the overall ambience and visitor experience of the town.
TCP 6	Embed an age-friendly approach to the design of the public realm.
TCP 7	Support and encourage the principle of healthy place-making in Castlebar.

Town Centre Objectives	
It is an Objective of the Council to:	
TCO 1	Encourage and facilitate the development of Opportunity Sites in Castlebar for a mixture of uses that will contribute to the regeneration, vibrancy, diversity, vitality, attractiveness, safety, liveability and compact growth of the town centre. In conjunction with this, proposed developments must demonstrate how they will interact within its context and the wider urban area.
TCO 2	Continue to develop and implement the Castlebar Town Centre Regeneration Strategy, and encourage and facilitate the reuse and regeneration of derelict, vacant, backland and underutilised lands and buildings in the town centre through active land management for retail, residential and other mixed uses and where necessary through appropriate legislative mechanisms/instruments and / or by supporting the progression and delivery of projects

	funded by the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund and other appropriate funds to achieve this aim.
TCO 3	(a) Promote high quality place-making and public realm in accordance with the Mayo Development Plan 2022 – 2028, including the Development Management Standards, any replacement thereof and any relevant Section 28 Guidance. All development shall demonstrate climate resilience measures to climate-proof critical infrastructure. (b) Ensure the highest quality of public realm and urban design principles are applied in the town centre, and the opportunity areas identified in this Proposed Plan. The success of the public realm is high quality, easily maintained street furniture, soft landscaping. Drainage solutions should be designed on the principles of SuDS. (c) Ensure development proposals have given proper consideration to the urban design criteria of site context, connectivity, inclusivity, variety, efficiency, distinctiveness, layout, public realm, adaptability, privacy and amenity, parking and detailed design.
TCO 4	Work with landowners and other stakeholders in the redevelopment of the identified ‘opportunity sites’ for appropriate town centre uses over the lifetime of the Plan.
TCO 5	Work in partnership with community groups in the development of regeneration initiatives and public realm enhancement projects and to seek funding for projects as opportunities arise.
TCO 6	Support the provision of cycling infrastructure, bicycle parking facilities and electric vehicle charging points in the town centre, in accordance with the recommendations of the Local Transport Plan and subject to traffic and pedestrian safety
TCO 7	Undertake a building heights and residential density study for Castlebar town, within a year of adoption of this Local Area Plan, in order to identify suitable locations within the town where development potential for greater height and density rates can be suitably accommodated. These may require screening for SEA/AA and Ecological Impact Assessment as appropriate.
TCO 8	Developers will be required to prepare urban design frameworks/masterplan for the Opportunity Sites in Castlebar Town Centre to inform future development proposals.
TCO 9	Maintain and enhance the vitality and vibrancy of the Town Centre by addressing and controlling leakage of social, economic and service activities to areas outside the Town Centre.
TCO 10	Prevent the use of film or screening that obscures the glazed areas of a shopfront window where it negatively impacts upon the streetscape.

Chapter 5 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

5.1 Strategic Aims

To support and enhance the sustainable economic growth of Castlebar, consistent with its role as a Key Town through the provision of designated areas for high quality employment, through the expansion and protection of its tourism product and through the enhancement and expansion of its role as a thriving retail destination.

5.2 Introduction

The NPF sets out the development of a strong economy supported by enterprise, innovation and skills as a National Strategic Outcome, that will depend on creating places that foster enterprise and innovation and attract investment and talent. The NPF states that this can be achieved by building regional economic drivers. The RSES has designated Castlebar as a Key Town, and therefore is regarded as having the capacity to act as a regional economic growth driver. To fulfil Castlebar's regional role, it is critically important that job opportunities are created in the town to sustain its economic growth. A healthy economy contributes to the quality of life for those who live and work in the town and its environs. Retaining existing jobs and creating new employment opportunities in Castlebar are key priorities for the Council.

5.3 Castlebar-Westport Economic Growth Cluster

The RSES considers that the economic growth of Castlebar can be enhanced through the creation of an economic growth cluster with the nearby town of Westport. To advance this regional economic growth cluster, Mayo County Council have produced the Castlebar Westport Economic Growth (CWEG) Cluster Study 2040. The CWEG Cluster model is intended as a spatially targeted economic development approach to leverage public and private investment. The agglomeration of the two towns will help to address the current challenge of scale and will lever the inherent quality of life characteristics on offer in this West coast location.

This economic growth cluster seeks to harness and develop the complementary strengths and synergies between Castlebar and Westport and their functional hinterlands. This will help create highly connected centres of scale, with the necessary critical mass, in terms of population and employment. It will enable both towns to compete and grow to fulfil their potential and drive regional and national development in tandem with regional and national policy and when combined, make a compelling case for a regional growth cluster.

The development of the new N5 road, represents a significant investment to link the two towns and underpins and reinforces this connection. The strategic approach recommended within the study sets out a road map to achieve a Castlebar-Westport Economic Growth Cluster (CWEG CLUSTER 2040).

5.4 Economic Profile

Castlebar has a significant employment and service function relative to its regional and local catchment. Castlebar is the County Town and the principal place of employment in County Mayo. Furthermore, it is the chosen location for several large multinational corporations (Baxter Pharmaceuticals, Meissner Filtration and Fort Wayne Metals), government departments, health and educational institutions. The Irish Retail Centre Rankings place Castlebar 7th largest retail centre in Ireland in terms of retail spend, second only to Galway City in Connacht. The significant employment sectors in 2016, included wholesale, retail and commerce; education, human health and social work activities; manufacturing, commerce and trade and professional services; and public administration and defence, all of which were above the state average in 2016.

An established measure of the employment ‘health’ of a settlement is a measure called ‘Jobs to Resident Workers Ratio’. This is the relationship between the number of people in the labour force and the number of jobs in any defined area. According to POWSCAR 2016, the total number of jobs located in Castlebar was 9,045 and the total number of resident workers was 4,710. Therefore, the jobs to resident workers ratio of 1.920. This is an indicator of a healthy strong economy function, as there are more jobs than resident workers in Castlebar, and therefore, people travel to the town to avail of those employment opportunities.

5.5 Economic Development Strategy

A key principle underpinning this Plan is the pursuit of sustainable economic development opportunities to provide for an increase in the number of jobs based in the town. Castlebar is an important employment centre within and outside of the County Mayo. The town has a healthy job to resident workers ratio of jobs, attracting workers from a wide catchment area. For Castlebar to fulfil its role as a regional economic growth driver, the town must aim to increase its jobs creation over the longer term. The overarching guidance in the NPF is that job creation should follow population growth at a ratio of 0.66:1 (NPO1c). Therefore, the Economic Development Strategy targets at least 1,859 extra jobs by 2028, above 2016 figures, as set out in Table 5.2 below. The jobs ratio aligns with the 0.66 jobs ratio target for the region, as outlined in the NPF.

Castlebar	2011	2016	2028 (Population Projection)
Population	12,318	12,068	14,885
Labour Force	4,747	4,710	5,809
No. of jobs in Castlebar	8,956	9,045	10,904
Job Ratio	1.887	1.920	1.877

Table 5.1 – Population and Jobs Information, Census (RSES: pop growth match with job creation at 0.66:1.0 = 0.66X (14,885-12,068=2,817) = 1,859 additional jobs needed.)

Mayo County Council is therefore particularly focused on ensuring there is a range and quality of employment opportunities to meet the needs and aspirations of the existing and future local population and wider catchment. The Council will work with other local organisations in this regard, such as the County Enterprise Board, Castlebar Chamber of Commerce, IDA and Enterprise Ireland. In this regard, proposals put to the Council for employment generating uses will be treated in a positive manner, unless there are clear reasons in the interests of the proper planning and sustainable development of the area to adopt a contrary view.

5.5.1 The Economic Development Strategy for Castlebar will be achieved by:

- Providing the necessary infrastructure and quantum of zoned lands to attract economic development in recognition of the status Castlebar as a Key Town.
- Capitalising on the existing infrastructure in place in Castlebar to enhance the local employment base.
- Regeneration of the town centre area for the provision for retail and commercial, hospitality, cultural and amenity functions.
- Support the Castlebar-Westport Economic Growth Cluster with a view of achieving Regional Growth Centre status in the future.
- Continuing to develop Castlebar as a Level Two, County Town Centre in accordance with the RSES and the County Regional Retail Hierarchy, by consolidating the retail & town centre offering and improving on the urban fabric and public realm of the town centre area.
- Ensuring new commercial or business floorspace will allow for future flexibility, including future subdivision and/or amalgamation to provide for a range of accommodation, particularly for small businesses.
- Development of the tourist profile of Castlebar and expansion of the tourism offering of Castlebar by supporting tourism developments, such as the Lough Lannagh Holiday Village, development of Castlebar as a Sports/Activity Tourism Hub, provision of the Westport - Turlough Greenway link and other spin off enterprises.
- Supporting and facilitating, subject to environmental and other relevant planning considerations, all forms of employment generation.
- Work with the (Local Enterprise Office (LEO), IDA, OPW, Chamber of Commerce and other agencies in relation to the development of potential economic opportunities for Castlebar and its environs.

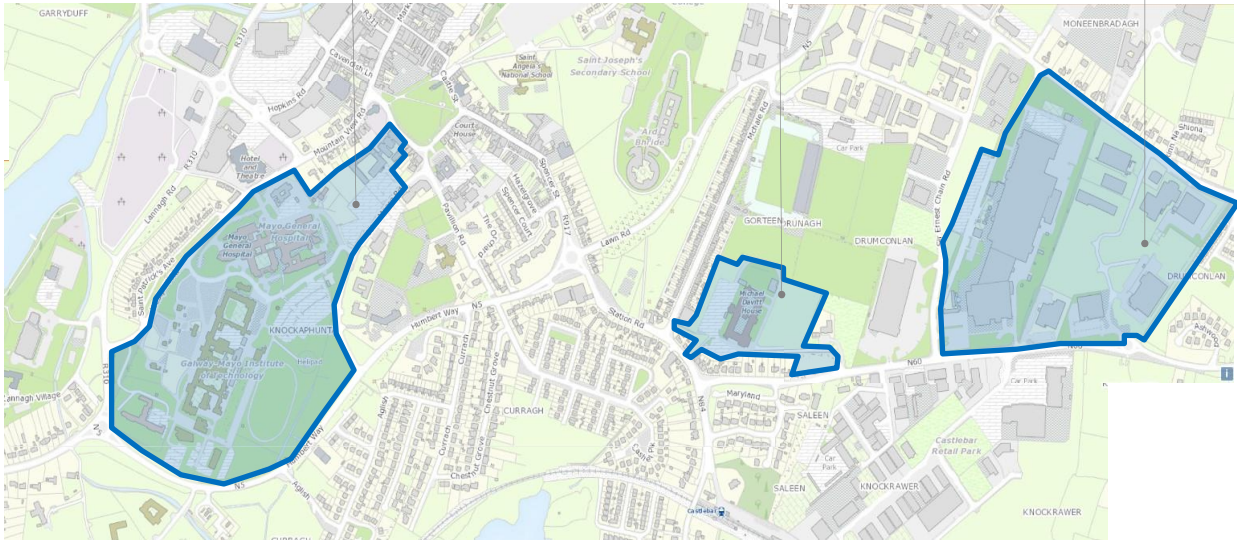
5.5.2 Commercial: Office and Enterprise

Castlebar has an administrative function for various bodies, including offices of the Department of Agriculture and Food, Revenue, Garda Pulse, and main offices of Mayo County Council. The IDA Ireland has a number of key strategic sites throughout Mayo, including the existing Castlebar Business and Technological Park located off the N60 Claremorris Road. Recent projects within the IDA Park include the building of the Meissner and Fort Wayne buildings, which has significantly reduced the site for additional building/enterprises at the existing IDA Park. Map 5.1 below shows the location of the main employment sites in Castlebar.

Employment Site
 Mayo University
 ATU Mayo

Employment Site
 Dept. of Agriculture,
 Social Welfare & Garda Pulse

Employment Site
 Baxter & IDA Business



Map 5.1 – Main Employment Sites



Fort Wayne, IDA Park, Castlebar



Meissner, IDA Park, Castlebar

5.5.3 Industry

The location of Baxter, Meissner Filtration and Fort Wayne Metals in Castlebar provides the town a significant economic boost and advantage over many of its neighbouring towns in the county, particularly with the recent growth of Meissner Filtration and Fort Wayne. There continues to be a need for a diverse range of employment opportunities in Castlebar, including in the manufacturing sector (see Table 5.2 below). It is therefore important to retain Castlebar’s existing established industrial base, while also seeking to expand further the industrial activities appropriate to the town. The industry zoning objectives set out in this Plan allows for industrial development and a range of related uses that could be suitably located within industrial estates and enterprise zoned lands within the Plan boundary.

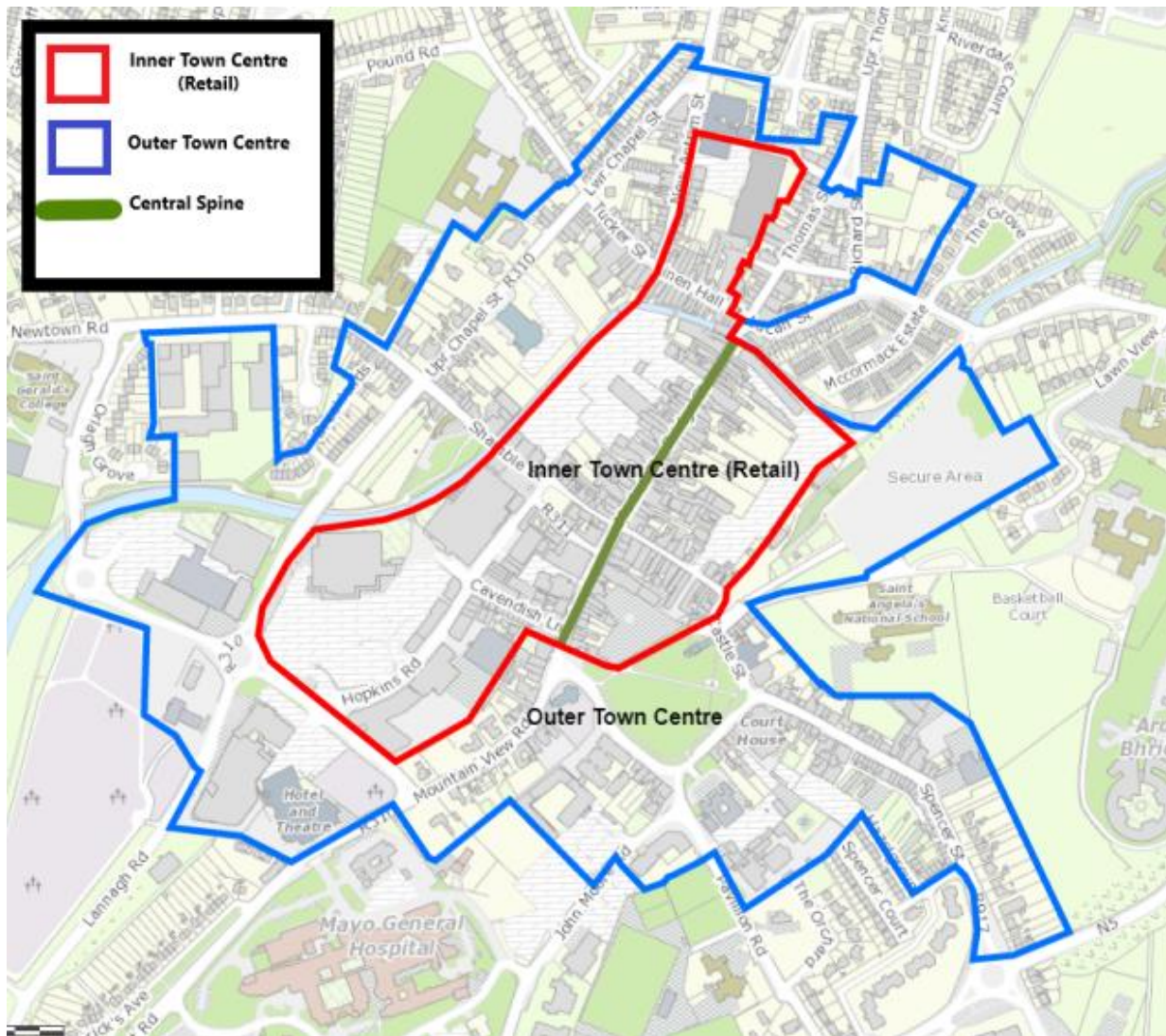
Castlebar Industry 2016	Total	%
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	55	1.13
Building and construction	209	4.31
Manufacturing industries	541	11.16
Commerce and trade	1,195	24.65
Transport and communications	173	3.57
Public administration	329	6.79
Professional services	1,349	27.83
Other	996	20.55
Total	4,847	100

Table 5.2 – Castlebar Industry Breakdown (Census 2016)

5.6 Retail

Castlebar is the principal retail and service centre in County Mayo. It is ideally located enabling to draw from an extensive catchment area. The majority of retailing in Castlebar is concentrated in the town centre around the main shopping streets on Market Street, Bridge Street, Linenhall Street, Shambles Street, Duke Street, Ellison Street and Hopkin’s Road. In addition, there has been considerable edge of town development in the form of retail warehousing on the periphery. The Plan encourages compact growth in the town centre and core retail area. It is recognised that the retail sector is pivotal to regeneration and renewal of Castlebar town centre, its economic viability and delivery of a high-quality public realm, built environment and sense of place.

The Mayo County Development Plan 2022-2028 recognises a four-tier retail hierarchy in the county. This retail hierarchy is consistent with the Section 28 Retail Planning Guidelines (2012) and aims to concentrate higher order shopping functions in Castlebar. The sequential approach to development will be applied to proposals for retail development in accordance with the Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities (DoEHLG 2012). The land use zoning maps for Castlebar, identifies inner retail core (town centre) and outer retail core (edge of town centre) town centre areas to assist in the application of the sequential approach, whilst ensuring edge of centre sites are within easy walking distance of the identified primary retail area of the town.



Map 5.2 Town Centre Area (Inner and Outer)

5.6.1 (i) Town Centre Retail Areas

Castlebar town centre is primarily based around a central spine, which runs from Thomas Street, in the north, towards the junction of Stephen Garvey Way and the R310, to the south. It is largely characterised by small, narrow plot sizes interspersed with larger civic and financial buildings. It offers a range of convenience and comparison shops, pharmacies, cafés/ restaurants and public houses. The western end of the town centre extends towards the Link Road near Lough Lannagh, whilst the eastern boundary is located at the Cathal Duffy roundabout.

The Plan focuses on the regeneration of the town centre (See Chapter 4) to cater for its changing role, providing for significant retail and commercial functions, in tandem with bringing back homes into the centre. The regeneration of the town centre represents an opportunity to develop a sustainable environment which is an attractive place to work, live, invest, study and visit.

5.6.2 (ii) Inner & Outer Town Centre Areas

Castlebar contains two distinct commercial/retail areas, they are presented on Map 5.2 which illustrates the Inner & Outer town centre areas.

The inner town centre (retail) area, represents the historical shopping core, which contains a wide range of convenience and comparison shops, office and residential apartments adding to the mix of uses located within/along the historic central spine. It is in this inner town centre (retail) area that new retail both comparison and convenience will be encouraged to locate in order to maintain and enhance the vibrancy and vitality of this town core. The previous leakage of essential town centre uses from the inner town centre will be strongly discouraged.

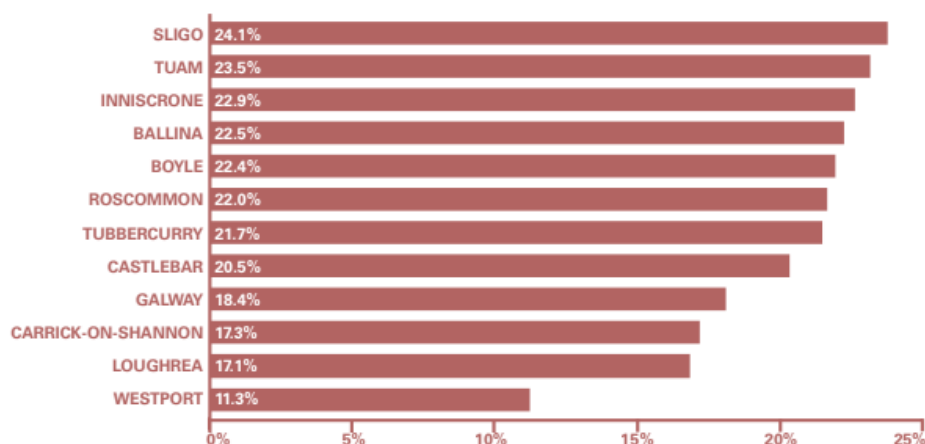
It is preferable that the inner retail area will be consolidated with new retail development locating along the western and eastern backlands off Market/Bridge Street, which is currently characterised by a combination of backlands and car parks. It is envisaged that this regenerated core will include a range of uses such as financial, hospitality, residential along with retail and retail services.

The outer retail area contains the second core shopping area, shown as Outer Town Centre on Map 5.2 above, which is located along Lannagh Road and is relatively new in comparison to the historic retail area along the central spine. This core area contains a large anchor supermarket in Aldi, other large shops such as TK Maxx, Next, Shaws etc. which contain large car parking facilities, there is also a wide range of retail units, offices, fast food restaurants and hotel within the area. In addition, other retailing provisions in this area are provided along Spencer Street and Chapel Street.

Section 4.4.6 of the Mayo County Development Plan, 2022-2028 contains a detailed policy framework for the management of retail development throughout the County. Retail development proposals in Castlebar will be assessed against the aforesaid CDP policy framework and other relevant policies of this Plan.

(iii) Vacancy

The NPF, RSES and Mayo County Development Plan 2022-2028 places a particular emphasis on the challenge presented by vacancy rates in our towns and villages. Figure 5.1 below shows the national vacancy rate stands at 13.5% and the rate for the Castlebar stands at 20.5% (Q2 2022),



Source: GeoDirectory Database - 29/06/2022

Figure 5.1 - Commercial Vacancy Rate by Town Q2 of 2022

Mayo County Council has carried out a building use survey of Castlebar town centre (See Figure 5.2 below) in Q3 of 2022. The survey showed the town centre of Castlebar contains a wide variety of activities from retail, office and residential uses to municipal buildings. It offers a range of convenience and comparison shops, pharmacies, cafés and restaurants, and public houses. The survey established a retail/commercial vacancy rate of the LAP town centre zoned area within the plan of the Castlebar town centre at 20.5%.

The level of vacancy in the town centre area has become a pronounced issue in recent years, with factors such as online shopping and has been further exacerbated by the Covid-19 Pandemic. A concerted effort will be made through various funding mechanisms and careful control of new development to ensure that the core shopping areas in the town of all sizes are attractive, maintained and well serviced with infrastructure to secure their prosperity into the future

To reduce retail/commercial vacancy levels, the Council will actively pursue the regeneration and renewal of Castlebar town centre through the redevelopment of identified opportunity sites (Chapter 4) and the delivery of a high-quality public realm. This will greatly enhance the economic vitality and viability of the town centre, increase footfall and reduce retail and commercial vacancy.

5.7 Tourism

Mayo County Council recognises that there is a major opportunity to further develop the tourist profile through the promotion of Castlebar as an attractive market town rich in heritage, with a strategic location in Co. Mayo. Moreover, it has a wealth of historic buildings, and an attractive centre for visiting the wider Western Region. The continued success of festivals such as the Blues Festival and the International Walking Festival can also be further developed, while the Castlebar River, as an important salmon and trout river, can be more actively promoted as an angling attraction.

A key priority for Castlebar in the RSES is to improve cycle and walking tourism/recreational infrastructure. Similarly, connectivity of the Great Western Greenway at Castlebar to Westport and the Wild Atlantic Way and other tourism related infrastructure is paramount. The delivery of the cycling infrastructure through the Castlebar LTP and the recently constructed urban greenway through the town will help realise this priority.

Castlebar has significant tourism potential, it is home to Lannagh Holiday Village, a greenway link to Westport/Turlough and near the nationally significant tourism attraction, National Museum of Ireland Country Life. Castlebar has a broad range of public amenity, sports and recreational facilities. The town has significant potential to build on ongoing investment in a national outdoor pursuit's facility and to position Castlebar as a location for sports tourism. Mayo County Council proposed to develop a recreational strategy for Lough Lannagh, in order to aid and enable Castlebar's emergence as a major sports tourist and adventure destination on a national scale.

Measures to actively encourage the development of tourist related uses in the town will be pursued by Mayo County Council, including increased and improved bed spaces and accommodation, leisure, amenity and conference facilities. The focus will be on Castlebar as a visitor base/gateway to the natural, built and cultural environment of the wider area, providing access to the combination of hill walking, fishing, cycle ways, places of interest and local villages.



Figure 5.2 – National Museum of Country life & Lough Lannagh Leisure facilities

5.8 Remote Working, Co-working and Business Workspaces

Castlebar was voted “*The Best Place to work from Home in Ireland*” in 2022. [Switcher.ie](https://www.switcher.ie/) created a Remote Working Index (RWI) which looks at a range of criteria where it is considered a great place to work from home and live. The criteria considered in the index includes the following:

- ✓ Low house prices
- ✓ Low crime rates
- ✓ Broadband Speeds & 5G mobile coverage
- ✓ Access to green spaces such as parks, woodlands, waterways
- ✓ The number of gyms, fitness and leisure centres
- ✓ The number of cafes, coffee shops and food delivery services
- ✓ Proximity to healthcare, GP surgeries and top schools



Figure 5.3 – Sample of Shared Working Spaces

The Plan encourages shared workspaces (see figure 5.2 above) as a use in order to accommodate those who do not wish to commute long distances and who seek to avail of a local formalised shared work environment. Having regard to the demand arising from the changed work patterns and behaviours, this plan supports the provision of appropriately located remote working hub/premises for the purposes of multi-purpose shared working space. The Council recognises that managed co-working hubs provide much more than a physical centre for start-ups and expanding enterprises, allowing important interaction between early stage entrepreneurs, remote workers, more experienced business owners and Local Enterprise staff. Increased investment in remote working hubs that are in locations that suit commuters and are close to childcare facilities will also potentially attract people

to live in towns. Town centre locations are preferred (though not limited to), where the reuse of underutilised or vacant properties will be encouraged and supported. The location for remote working hubs will be underpinned by the zoning objectives and provisions as set out in the Land Use Zoning Matrix in Chapter 11.

5.8.1 Live – Work Units

Traditionally office-based activities have tended to have a high density of employment and whilst the impacts of the COVID 19 pandemic on the density of employees per office space is not yet clear, it is anticipated that employers will require lower densities and, in some cases, offer a blended solution of office and remote working. The potential increase in working from home/e-working as a result of COVID-19 provides new opportunities for people who would like to live in Castlebar and also to increase the vibrancy of the town centre through the concept of a live-work unit.

A live-work unit can be defined as a single commercial unit, designed to accommodate a residential element e.g. commercial ground floor with living accommodation over. Live-work units are used for business/enterprise to provide for uses such as office, medical and related consultations, data processing, software development, media associated uses, publishing and film production, artists and crafts studios, home-based economic activity and creative industries.

While this Plan supports the concept of home working, it is important that such activity is not injurious to the amenities of a predominantly residential area and therefore employment use in a dwelling should be restricted to the occupier(s) of the dwelling and such use should be subordinate to the main use of the dwelling as a residence.

5.9 Economic Development Policy & Objectives

Economic Development Policy	
It is a Policy of the Council to:	
EDP 1	Encourage the development of employment areas in a comprehensive and sequential manner which uses existing infrastructure effectively and efficiently, ensuring they are designed to the highest architectural and landscaping standards, with natural site features, such as watercourses, trees and hedgerows be retained and enhanced as an integral part of the development/scheme.
EDP 2	Support the development and expansion of enterprise and employment within Castlebar, and to co-operate with all stakeholders, landowners and relevant agencies to attract investment, while at the same time ensuring there is no resultant negative impact on the vitality and vibrancy of the town centre.
EDP 3	Support and promote the development of economic and enterprise development and activity in a manner which contributes to the transition to a low carbon, climate resilient and environmentally sustainable county.

Economic Development Objectives

It is an Objective of the Council to:

EDO 1	Engage with IDA Ireland and the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment in seeking to attract Foreign Direct Investment into Castlebar.
EDO 2	Ensure new enterprise and employment uses provide Workplace Travel Plans /Mobility Management Plans to reduce dependency on private modes of travel consistent with the principles set out in the National Transport Authority guidance: 'Achieving Effective Workplace Travel Plans'.
EDO 3	Support, promote and facilitate the provision of shared co-working spaces/hubs in town centre and other appropriate locations in Castlebar to provide multi-purpose flexible workspace options.

Retail & Town Centre Policy

It is a Policy of the Council to:

EDP 4	Support the retail function of Castlebar as a Regional Tier 2 Category town in the Retail Hierarchy, and to consolidate existing retail development within the town centre.
EDP 5	Support and facilitate the development of retail, retail services and niche retailing in the town centre area, including new/infill development and redevelopment of an appropriate scale.
EDP 6	Support and facilitate the development of retail led tourism associated with the natural and built heritage assets of Castlebar.

Retail & Town Centre Objectives

It is an Objective of the Council to:

EDO 4	The Council, in accordance with the Retail Planning Guidelines for Local Authorities (DECLG, 2012 or as amended or superseded) will continue to protect and promote the vitality and viability of Castlebar town centre, including applying a 'town centre first approach' or sequential test for retail developments.
EDO 5	Manage the over proliferation of certain undesirable uses such as fast-food outlets, amusement arcades, off licences, bookmakers, and of other non-retail uses in the interest of protecting the vibrancy, residential amenity and public realm of Castlebar's town centre.
EDO 6	Ensure that new shop front and signage design contributes positively to and enhances the streetscape and is in accordance with the guidance set out in The Development Management Standards of the Mayo County Development Plan 2022-2028 and as set out in the <i>Mayo Shopfronts</i> Booklet (Mayo County Council).

EDO 7	Support, promote and facilitates measures, such as town centre regeneration, implementation of the local transport plan to improve accessibility and public realm improvements and other town centre first initiatives over the plan period, to reduce retail and commercial vacancy in Castlebar town centre.
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Tourism Policy

It is a Policy of the Council to:

EDP 7	Support and encourage the provision of ground floor live work units and/or co-working spaces, as part of mixed-use and residential developments, in appropriate town centre locations, as a means of enlivening streets and to provide flexible accommodation for small businesses and remote working opportunities.
EDP 8	Promote and support Castlebar as the sports capital of Mayo and seek to provide effective access to recreation and leisure opportunities within the natural environment and to maximise the local economic development opportunities while safeguarding the natural and build heritage.
EDP 9	Encourage the development of tourism activities such as water-based activities, cultural and food tourism including festivals and food markets in Castlebar.
EDP 10	Support the development of new tourist facilities or the upgrading / extension of existing tourist facilities.
EDP 11	Promote festivals and sporting events to increase the tourism, cultural and lifestyle profile of the town.
EDP 12	Encourage linkages to strong tourism locations such as Westport to realise the potential of the Castlebar Westport Economic Growth Cluster (CWEG).

Tourism Objectives

It is an Objective of the Council to:

EDO 8	Support and facilitate the development of an integrated network of greenways and heritage trails, including the Castlebar Urban Greenway to Turlough and Westport to link into the network of National Greenways.
EDO 9	Work with all relevant stakeholders and Failte Ireland to facilitate the provision of standardised signage and interpretation for tourism facilities and tourist attractions throughout the town.

Chapter 6 HOUSING AND SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

6.1 Strategic Aims

To facilitate and deliver liveable, high quality, nearly zero energy, integrated residential development that provides for an appropriate demographic mix in tandem with the delivery of good social and physical infrastructure to support the development of vibrant and diverse communities.

6.2 Introduction

Sustainable communities meet the residential, social and recreational needs of existing and future residents, their children and other users, providing opportunities for prosperity and a high quality of life. The socio-economic context for Castlebar provides a picture of a healthy town which benefits from a wide range of natural, recreational and social amenities. The focus of the Plan period will be to enhance these amenities and provide quality housing and a range of choice to meet the needs of the change demographics and all sectors of the population.

6.3 Residential Development Strategy

The Development Strategy for Castlebar is based around a framework to facilitate residential development on lands zoned within the town centre and on a range of other residential sites within walking distance and close to existing services. The Council seeks to promote compact growth through the re-use and re-development of vacant properties, brownfield and infill sites within the town in a sequential manner. This will be achieved by locating a high proportion of housing in the existing built up footprint of Castlebar at appropriate densities, thereby strengthening the town centre. New housing allocation must be consistent with the Core Strategy and be proportionate to the size, function and capacity of Castlebar as a Key Town in accordance with the Settlement Hierarchy.

Residential development in Castlebar will be assessed having regard to the following national guidance and policies (and any review of these guidance documents):

- Housing for All – a New Housing Plan for Ireland (DHLGH 2021)
- Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities (DEHLG, 2007)
- Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (DEHLG, 2009)
- Design Standards for New Apartments (DHPLG, 2018)
- Urban Development and Building Heights (DHPLG, 2018)
- Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DTTS & DHPLG, 2013 and as updated)
- Development Management Standards set out at Volume 2 of the Mayo County Development Plan 2022-2028

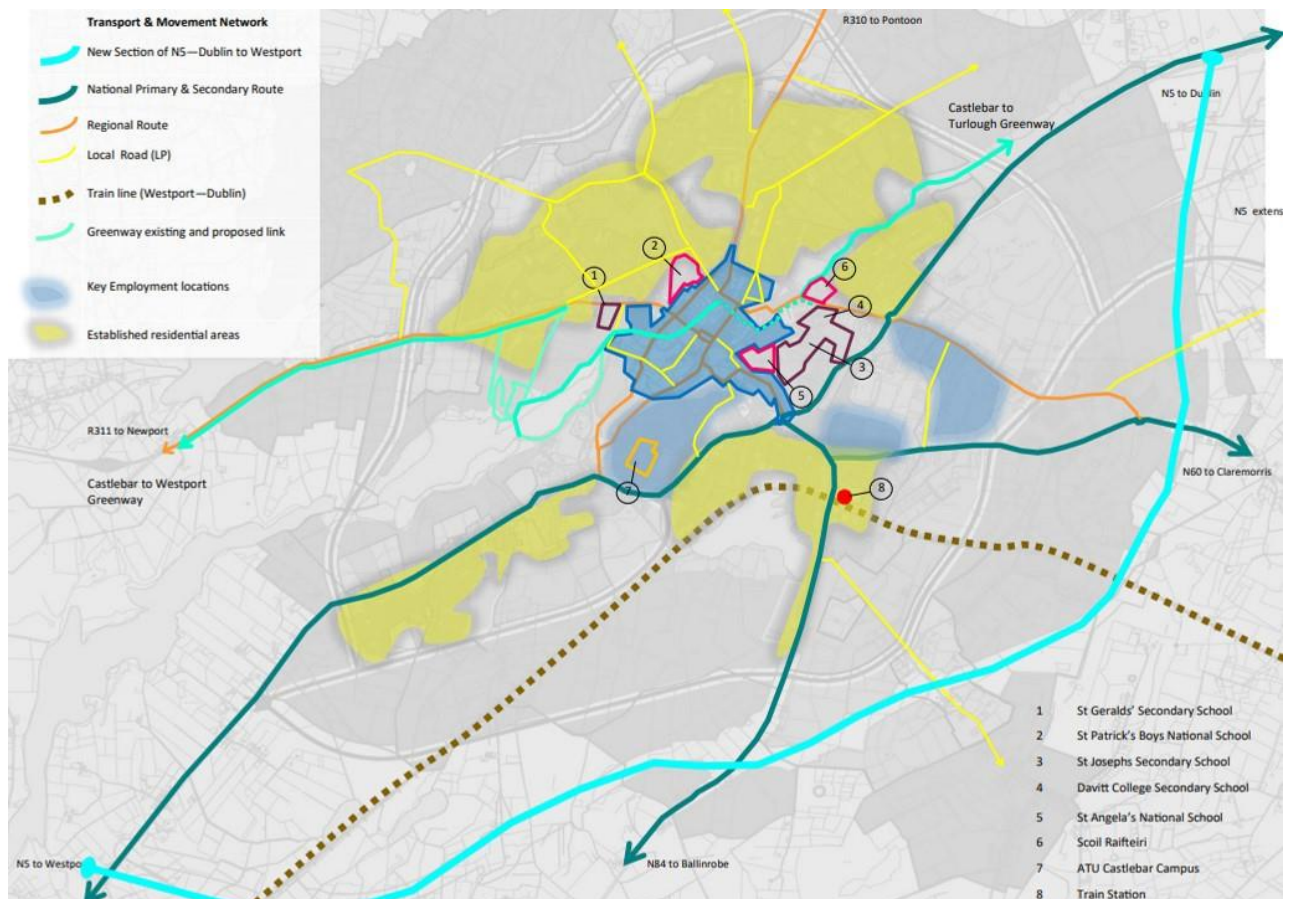


Figure 6.1 – Existing Transport & Movement Network with educational

6.4 Residential Development, Housing & Sustainable Communities

6.4.1 Housing Profile

Residential growth in Castlebar over past decades has generally taken place north, north-west and south west of the town off the Newport Rd, Westport Rd, Windy Gap Rd and Turlough Rd and is comprised generally of 3 and 4 bed semi-detached and detached housing. The pattern of housing in Castlebar consists of limited housing in the town centre with scope for expansion of high-density residential use. At the town fringes there are substantial modern housing estates of 3 and 4-bedroom semi-detached units built on cul-de-sac road systems. Some of these estates are detached from the town with interlacing areas of agriculture and other lands. This is particularly evident along the Westport Rd, Claremorris Rd and Turlough Rd. Some ribbon development is also evident along these roads. Castlebar has a significant presence of social and voluntary housing particularly in the Lios Na Circe and Knockthomas areas.

6.4.2 Residential Development, Capacity and Delivery

In accordance with the Mayo County Development Plan 2022-2028, and in order to facilitate the assessment of development proposals, applications will be required to be accompanied by an evidence-based analysis of housing needs and detailed design statements incorporating a mix of house types and sizes. All residential development proposals must comply with the provisions set out in the County Housing Strategy and Housing Need Demand Assessment as per the Mayo County Development Plan 2022-2028.

The development of infill sites and provision of living accommodation on upper floors of commercial units within the town centre is supported by this Plan. Proposals for infill development should be sensitively designed to have regard to proximity of neighbouring buildings, the uses of proposed development and neighbouring properties, impacts on light, overshadowing, servicing, noise and general disturbance.

In accordance with the provisions of the County Development Plan, the Housing Strategy and the requirements of Part V of the Act, social & affordable housing is required to be delivered as part of new private housing developments. The Council will continue to deliver social housing in Castlebar through the Rebuilding Ireland and Housing for All programmes including consideration for those with disabilities and special needs.

6.4.3 Residential Density, Mix & Design

Higher densities will be applied to Castlebar to align with its role as a Key Town (Tier 1(a)), subject to good design and development management standards being met. Increasing prevailing heights has a critical role to play in addressing the delivery of more compact growth in Castlebar Town Centre, making optimal use of the capacity of sites in the town centre where transport, employment, services or retail development can achieve a requisite level of intensity for sustainability. Tenure is an important consideration for the delivery of housing. Section 6.6 of the NPF identifies the need to estimate the demand for different tenure types. Therefore, in accordance with national policy, regional and local policy and to respond to our demographic trends for smaller housing sizes and an ageing population, residential development over the Plan period will provide a greater range of choice and options to meet the various needs of the community.

The overall design and layout of new schemes should be of high quality and comply with the Urban Housing policy and objectives set out in Volume 1/Written Statement and Volume 2/ Development Management Standards of the Mayo County Development Plan 2022-2028. The Planning Authority may exercise its discretion in relation to quantitative standards in certain circumstances (see Section 10.2), particularly in appropriate town centre locations. Residential proposals within the Plan area must aim to deliver appropriate densities, adequate mix of building typologies and have consideration for prevailing heights appropriate to the urban context, with particular regard for the built heritage of Castlebar.

6.4.4 Density:

Historically, the town centre of Castlebar is characterised by buildings designed to accommodate commercial use at ground floor, with accommodation or living space above 'living over the shop'. Analysis of the area indicates that key community infrastructure and the train station are within the 5-10-minute walk bands of the town centre and essential community and transport infrastructure. The Plan seeks to provide mixed uses incorporating residential development, which can potentially accommodate higher densities within the town centre area in line with compact urban living. The Plan supports proposals for residential development in appropriate infill or brownfield locations within the Town Centre zoned area which can generally accommodate development complying with the requirements of the Mayo County Development Plan 2022-2028. On lands outside of the Town Centre area, the pattern and type of existing residential development is categorised by housing schemes and

estates of varying scales, with a range and mix of house types, typically of semi-detached and detached two storey typologies. Local variations will be considered based on the character and specific restrictions or considerations including adjacent high-quality open space or sustainable travel opportunities.

6.4.5 Mix & Height:

As the county town and a Tier 1 Strategic Growth Centre, it is anticipated that there will be a demand for a varied mix and type of housing. The Plan seeks to ensure a greater mix of house types; and to provide for both a mix of dwelling size and dwelling type to cater for a diverse range of housing needs. Design and layout of schemes should be of high quality and comply with the urban housing and urban design principles contained in Vol 2 of the Mayo County Development Plan 2022-2028 and shall include the requirement for a justification in the form of a Statement of Housing Mix setting out the rationale /justification, along with consideration for the existing character and mix of the area, design, location, market considerations and Part V requirements.

Settlement Strategy Objective 16 (SSO 16) of the Mayo County Development Plan 2022-2028 seeks to identify and facilitate increased building heights for appropriate uses in suitable locations in Castlebar in accordance with Specific Planning Policy Requirements (SPPR) 1-4 of the Urban Development and Building Heights Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2018). The increasing of prevailing heights has a critical role to play in addressing the delivery of higher density development particularly capitalising on the potential for delivery of residential units at locations where transport, employment, services or retail development can be optimised. Height, including transitional height arrangements, will be considered in appropriate locations within and close to the Town Centre, proximate to existing public transport nodes, close to locations of employment and/or third level educational institutions where there is ease of access to a range of urban amenities and sustainable transport options.

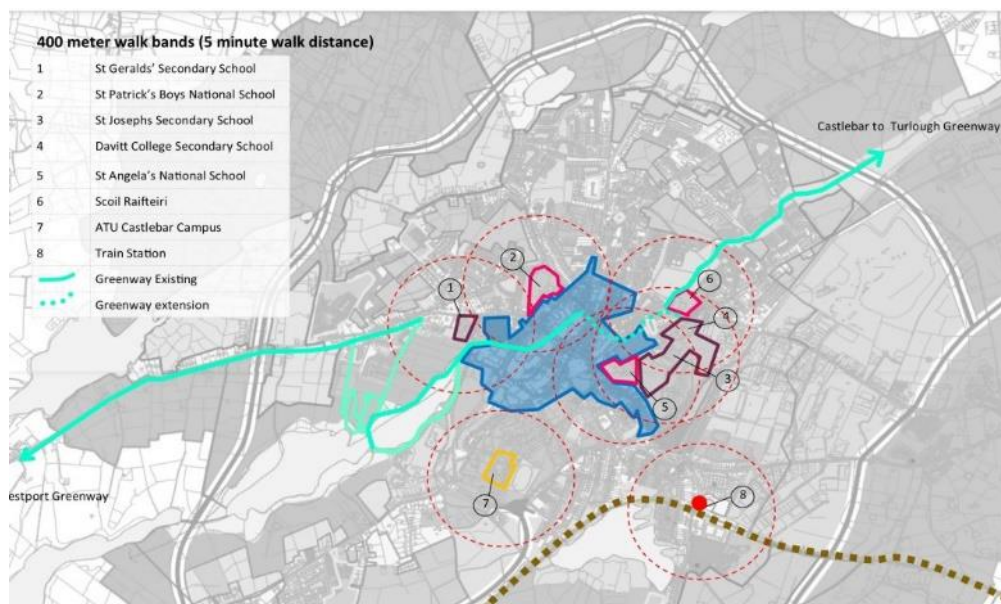


Figure 6.2 – 400m walking bands from important hubs.

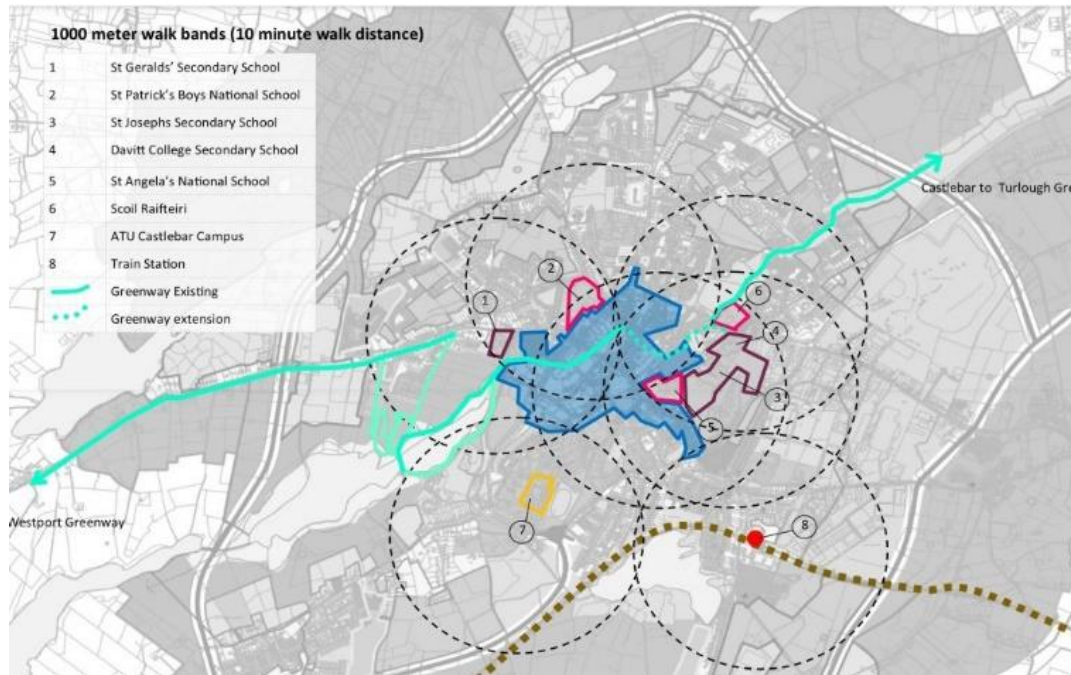


Figure 6.3 – 1000m walking bands from important hubs.

6.4.6 Housing for Older People / Special Needs Housing

Castlebar has a number of dedicated services for people with special needs and elderly persons within the town, including facilities such as the Cuan Chaitriona Nursing Home and the Castlebar men’s shed at the GMIT campus. As the population of the town is likely to continue to age, further dedicated services will be required for elderly persons.

Housing is a key social policy area that needs to adapt to meet the changing needs of older people. The NPF supports national policy to assist older people to live with dignity and independence in their own homes and communities, for as long as possible. It highlights the need for well-designed lifetime adaptable infill and brownfield development, close to existing services and facilities, supported by universal design and improved urban amenities. Accommodation for the elderly in Castlebar will be required to locate in existing residential areas, well served by social infrastructure and amenities, such as footpath networks, public transport and local facilities and services, to allow for better care in the community, independence and access, ensuring that residents are not isolated. All new developments will be required to provide accommodation suitable and adaptable for the elderly. The Plan will support the implementation of the Mayo Disability Strategy and the provision of dedicated elderly and special needs services including assisted living, supported living, nursing homes and day care centres.

6.4.7 Traveller Accommodation

The 2016 Census identified 307 travellers present in Castlebar on census night. The Council recognises the distinct culture and lifestyle of the Travelling Community and it will endeavour to provide suitable accommodation for travellers who are indigenous to the area. Humbert Way on the N5 Westport Road is the only designated halting site in Castlebar.

The Traveller Accommodation Programme 2019-2024 outlines the Councils proposals to meet the accommodation needs of traveller families in the county as a whole, including Castlebar and sets out

a strategy to achieve these proposals. The Council will consult with the Travelling Community, their representative organisations and local communities in relation to the siting, planning and design of traveller accommodation such as halting sites or group housing schemes, in order to promote social inclusion.

6.4.8 Low Energy Housing

The design construction and operation of new buildings has a significant role to play in reducing energy demand and increasing energy efficiency into the future. The Nearly Zero Energy Buildings (NZEB) applies to all new buildings occupied after the 31st December 2020. Therefore, all new homes will have a typical Building Energy Rating (BER) of A2 compared within the current rating for new builds of A3.

Retrofitting and refurbishment of the existing housing stock also plays an important role in meeting higher energy efficiency standards in the future. Grants are available through the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) to upgrade the energy efficiency of a person's home.

6.5 Community, Arts and Educational Facilities

Castlebar is well catered for in terms of community and social facilities and has many active community groups, and public and social enterprises located in the town including Castlebar Tidy Towns Committee, Castlebar ICA, Castlebar Social Services, Foróige, etc. These groups have been very successful in delivering a number of projects including the development of community initiatives, social inclusion initiatives, Healthy Ireland projects, farmers market, and numerous improvements to derelict and disused buildings in the town. Delivering physical and social infrastructure in tandem with residential development to support the continued development of a healthy, active and liveable town is a core aim of the Plan. The Council seek to support community led, arts & cultural projects which enhances the wellbeing of residents of the town and improve the quality of the environment in the town.

Health services in Castlebar include a Mayo University & The Sacred Heart Hospitals, Mayo/Roscommon Hospice, Castlebar Primary Care Centre, Western Care facility and many other health services. The Plan supports the proportionate expansion of healthcare facilities in the town and will zone sufficient land for this purpose. Castlebar is served by four primary schools, and three secondary schools (see Figures 6.1, 6.2 & 6.3) – St Gerald's (Boys), St Josephs (Girls) and Davitt College (Mixed), the schools are located on the Newport Road, The Lawn and Springfield respectively. Galway Mayo Institute of Technology (GMIT) also has a campus in Castlebar and has been integrated as part of the Atlantic Technological University alongside Sligo IT, Letterkenny IT. The Plan will support the proportionate expansion of education facilities in the town and land is zoned for this purpose. Castlebar is served by educational provision for students with special needs and disabilities including St. Brid's and St. Anthony's Special schools located on Pavilion Road and Humbert Way respectively.

Castlebar is also home to a number of adult educational providers including the Mayo College of Further Education and the Castlebar Adult Learning Centre. The provision of adult education services will continue to be supported in the Plan.

6.6 Gaeltacht Service Town

Castlebar is a designated Gaeltacht Service Town under the Gaeltacht Act 2012, it was designated as it has a significant role in providing public services, recreational, social and commercial facilities for nearby Gaeltacht's. The purpose of the Gaeltacht Act is to identify how to foster and reinforce the positive impact Castlebar can have on the Irish Language.

A language plan for Castlebar is currently being prepared, the purpose of which is to provide for an encourage the increased use of the Irish Language in family, educational, public, social, recreational and commercial life.

6.7 Sports and Recreation

Castlebar has a lot to offer in terms of sport and recreation and has a number of sporting and recreational facilities, particularly the facilities at Lough Lannagh which can become a nationally important Sports and Adventure Hub. The facilities include a loop walk, swimming pool & gym, climbing wall facility, tennis club, Multi Use Games Amenity (MUGA) and holiday village. A second phase of Mayo multi-sport facilities at Lough Lannagh is proposed in the town.

Other leisure facilities in Castlebar include The Town Park, The Mall, football grounds at Milebush, Castlebar Celtic, Castlebar Town FC, GMIT and GAA pitches at MacHale Park and Castlebar Mitchell's, Driving Range and Castlebar Golf Club in close proximity to the plan area. There are children's playgrounds and a number MUGAs located within the town boundary, Lough Lannagh has been adapted for children's play also. Policies for recreational facilities include support for local sporting and community organisations to develop their facilities and provide activities for residents and visitors to Castlebar. The plan also seeks to ensure that new school provision has adequate sport and leisure facilities that will be open for use to local communities. The Plan seeks to improve the overall appearance of the town by developing and enhancing existing amenities and facilities.

6.8 Open Space and Amenities

High quality open spaces and amenity areas are essential for a good quality of life and are key components of sustainable communities. Castlebar is well served in this regard, with natural amenities including Lough Lannagh, Saleen Lough, Turlough-Westport Greenway, Town Park, children's walks and playgrounds and sports fields. Green infrastructure includes nature conservation areas, parks, open space, rivers, floodplains, wetlands, woodlands, farmland and town greenways which support and improve environmental conditions in a way that facilitates environmental, economic and societal benefits. The protection of Green Infrastructure as well as the redevelopment of public open spaces and amenity areas, which are accessible to all, as well as providing play spaces for children that are safe is promoted in this Plan.

6.9 Mayo Age Friendly Strategy

The purpose of the Mayo Age Friendly Strategy (MAFS) is to work to improve the services and facilities that our older people have identified as being important to them and the wider community, as they live healthy and active lives. Age Friendly projects include, inter alia, the following—Outdoor Spaces

and Buildings; Transportation; Housing; Respect and Social Inclusion; Social Participation; Communication and Education; Civic Participation and Employment; Health and Wellbeing. The Mayo Age Friendly Strategy seeks to support older people to live independently with confidence, security and dignity in their homes for as long as possible and to encourage this age group to maintain, improve and manage their health and wellbeing.

Public realm projects will have regard to and implement the principles of the Universal Design and Age Friendly Ireland’s guidance and good practice documents on ‘Age Friendly Towns’ and ‘Being Age Friendly in the Public Realm’, where feasible. The Plan will also seek to ensure, where possible, that homes in new residential developments are universally designed to the Lifetime Homes standard set out in *Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities* (DEHLG, 2007).

6.10 Community and Climate Change

The greening of built environments can contribute to climate change adaptation and mitigation, by cooling the surrounding area and providing homes for wildlife, as well as ecosystem services. It also boosts property values and adds to the quality of life by filtering the air, reducing noise and creating attractive places where people can live or spend time. Castlebar has a number of vibrant community groups active in promoting climate action and enhancing biodiversity within the Plan area. Mayo County Council will seek to provide support to the local community in the development of sustainable energy initiatives.

6.11 Residential Development & Sustainable Communities Policy & Objectives

Residential Development Policy	
It is a Policy of the Council to:	
HSCP 1	Encourage the compact growth of Castlebar and undertake a town centre first approach to ensure that development proceeds sustainably and at an appropriate scale, density and sequence and in line with the County Core Strategy Table.
HSCP 2	Promote healthy place-making, increase the liveability factor of Castlebar, encourage the most efficient use of land, and ensure a mixture of residential unit types that are designed and constructed on the principles of universal design, life-long adaptability and energy efficiency.
HSCP 3	Encourage the reuse of upper floors above commercial premises in Castlebar for residential accommodation.
HSCP 4	Support new residential development and infill development that occurs in tandem with the delivery of supporting physical and social infrastructure.
HSCP 5	Support approved housing bodies and other sectoral agencies in the provision of a greater diversity of housing type and tenure, including social housing and exploring new models at low cost rental and affordable homeownership.

Residential Development Objectives

It is an Objective of the Council to:

HSCO 1	Support, promote and facilitate the appropriate consolidation, densification and/or redevelopment of brownfield and infill sites for residential uses within the footprint of the existing built up area, where appropriate, including living above the shop opportunities.
HSCO 2	Safeguard the amenity and integrity of completed residential estates and provide for smarter travel options, it is the objective of the Council to ensure that new access proposals to any adjoining lands through an existing completed residential estate is provided for pedestrian or bicycle movements/connectivity only.
HSCO 3	Seek to provide Traveller Specific Accommodation at appropriate locations close to key services, including education, community, health, recreation and public transport facilities in accordance with the Traveller Accommodation Programme 2019-2024 (or any updated).

Residential Density, Design & Mix Policy

It is a Policy of the Council to:

HSCP 6	Require that an appropriate sustainable mix of housing type, tenure, density and size is provided in all new residential areas, and in appropriate brownfield/infill areas to meet the needs of the population of Castlebar, including the provision of special needs housing, which includes housing for older people, people with disabilities, social housing, affordable housing and accommodation for the travelling community.
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Residential Density, Design & Mix Objectives

It is an Objective of the Council to:

HSCO 4	Require that a good mix of housing types and sizes is provided in all new residential areas and in appropriate brownfield/infill areas within the town centre and existing residential areas, to meet the needs of the population of Castlebar, including the provision of appropriate supported housing and longer term residential care solutions designed for older people and/or people with disabilities. This will include accommodation provided under Part V requirements
HSCO 5	Support and promote high levels of energy conservation, energy efficiency and the use of renewable energy sources in existing buildings, including retro fitting of energy efficiency in traditional buildings. All new buildings will be required to achieve the Nearly Zero Energy Buildings (NZEB) standard in line with the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive (EPBD).
HSCO 6	Comply with the Special Policy Planning Requirements (SPPRs) for apartment standards and building heights issued under Section 28(1) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended).

Gaeltacht Service Town Policy

It is a Policy of the Council to:

HSCP 7

Support the role of Castlebar as a Gaeltacht Service Town and support the implementation of Castlebar Irish Language Plan when published.

Gaeltacht Service Town Objective

It is an Objective of the Council to:

HSCO 7

Support and assist the formulation and implementation of Irish Language Plans through the lead agency Údarás Na Gaeltachta, within Castlebar as a Gaeltacht service Towns, as defined under the Gaeltacht Act, 2012.

Age Friendly Policies

It is a Policy of the Council to:

HSCP 8

Promote an age-friendly town, which seeks universal accessibility and age-friendly homes in accordance with the Age-Friendly Ireland - Ten Universal Design Features, 2021, and the best-practice guidance outlined in the Building for Everyone – A Universal Design Approach, by the Centre of Excellence in Universal Design.

Age Friendly Objectives

It is an Objective of the Council to:

HSCO 8

Support the objectives set out in Mayo Age Friendly County Strategy 2022–2026 and any subsequent strategy, regarding the implementation of Age Friendly principles in the planning, design and delivery of physical infrastructure, public realm works, business and commercial premises.

HSCO 9

Encourage the delivery of facilities and services for older people, at appropriate locations in Castlebar.

Community, Arts & Educational Policy

It is a Policy of the Council to:

HSCP 9

Facilitate and support a broad range of community, cultural and recreational facilities to serve the future needs of the residents of the Plan area and its wider catchment.

Community, Arts & Educational Objectives

It is an Objective of the Council to:

HSCO 10	Facilitate and secure the provision of social infrastructure to support existing and new communities within the Plan area, in a manner which provides flexibility to respond to varied and changing community needs.
HSCO 11	Encourage the development of new facilities and improvements to and expansion of existing facilities for educational, early learning, childcare and healthcare facilities, at appropriate locations in Castlebar.
HSCO 12	Actively engage with the Department of Education and Skills in the identification and delivery of school sites to address the emerging demands.

Sports and Recreation Objectives

It is an Objective of the Council to:

HSCO 13	Support, promote and facilitate the development of cultural, arts and performance spaces in Castlebar.
HSCO 14	Support the endeavours of sports and community groups in their acquisition and/or use of lands for sports and recreation purposes.
HSCO 15	Facilitate and promote the development of a network of playgrounds, amenity spaces and recreational areas for children of all ages which are universally designed throughout the town and its environs.
HSCO 16	Support and facilitate the provision for the development of an outdoor running track for Castlebar.
HSCO 17	Develop a recreational strategy for Lough Lannagh, in order to aid and enable Castlebar's emergence as a major sports and adventure destination in Mayo.
HSCO 18	Seek the development of additional municipal facilities that are available for all users within the town of Castlebar and its surrounding areas.

Chapter 7 MOVEMENT & TRANSPORT

7.1 Strategic Aim

Promote and develop a sustainable, integrated transport system for Castlebar that prioritises walking, cycling and public transport, and provides an appropriate level of road infrastructure, road capacity and traffic management to support future development and enhance connectivity to and from regional towns and cities.

7.2 Introduction

On a national level, both planning policy and transport policy emphasises the need to provide efficiencies for the movement of people and goods, through integrated multi-modal, accessible and affordable transport networks, high quality networks support competitiveness, economic progress, balanced regional development, access to opportunities. In addition, a key aim of NPF is the delivery of improved sustainable mobility in our towns and villages, which accords with Ireland's Climate Action Plan(s) to move away from polluting and carbon intensive population systems to new cleaner technologies, with transport related emissions set to reduce by 51% by 2030 and reduce vehicle kilometres travelled by 20%.

7.3 Castlebar Context

Chapter 6 of the Mayo County Development Plan sets out the county-level context for Movement and Transport. Mayo has one of the highest average rates of private car usage compared to the national average. Coupled with a lack of viable transport alternatives to commuters, the result is in a high dependency on the private car. This trend is reflected in the high levels of car-based travel in Castlebar, where the historical dispersed and disconnected nature of development has placed limitations on movement and circulation.

In Castlebar, the private car is still the main mode of transport. This Plan seeks to reduce the reliance on the private car and to focus land-use and development, in line with sustainable transport alternatives. By locating people close to employment and complimentary services the need for car-based travel is reduced, which makes active travel a more viable alternative. It is recognised that both location and design of development has a fundamental influence on travel patterns, and therefore an integrated approach to land use and transportation is taken.

It is equally important that Castlebar maintains and develops its existing transport related infrastructure including road, rail and transport links to ensure its functional role both as a Tier 1 Key Town and its shared strategic role as an Economic Growth Cluster (Castlebar-Westport) in the advancement of the Atlantic Economic Corridor (AEC) initiative.

A suite of policies and objectives set out in the County Development Plan promote and underpin the delivery and provisions for transport in line with compact, sequential growth. A major challenge facing Castlebar is – the facilitation of future growth balanced against the need to address traffic congestion, whilst improving connectivity and movement of people within the town area, the wider area and beyond.

7.4 Integration of Land Use, Transport and Sustainable Mobility

Settlement patterns play a fundamental role in influencing how people travel, both the distances undertaken and the modal choice. The proximity of populations to education, retail and leisure assists in generating an environment which promotes a shift towards active modes, such as walking and cycling. Therefore, there is a need to ensure that alternatives to the car are integrated in the design of streets and public spaces, prioritising cycling and walking as active transport modes. The effective management of space within the town centre should deliver a high level of priority and permeability for walking and cycling to create accessible, attractive, vibrant and safe places to work, live, shop and engage in community life.

The Mayo County Development Plan examines the existing modes of travel and modal split, recognising the need to reduce car dependency through the promotion of compact development, sustainable travel and the integration of land-use and transport in planning for future growth, in line with its Core Strategy.

In compliance with objective MTO 1 of the CDP and regional policy objective RPO 6.17 of the RSES, a Local Transport Plan (LTP) is being prepared for Castlebar (Castlebar LTP).

7.5 Castlebar Local Transport Plan (CTLP)

The emerging Castlebar LTP is aimed at providing a functional and active travel network from the town centre outwards. It has been prepared in collaboration with the NTA and will run concurrently with this Plan. The Local Transport Plan presents an evidence-based assessment of the town, which takes into consideration the location, land-use and transport infrastructure and provides a suite of recommendations for various modes of travel to serve forecasted travel demand based on population & employment growth targets for Castlebar.

A key aim of the emerging Castlebar LTP is to improve the integration between Land Use and Transport Planning. It provides an appraisal of the current transport environment bringing sustainable transport considerations to the forefront. In particular, the LTP provides alternatives to car-base travel, including the promotion of active travel and alternative technologies, as well as a strategy for the delivery of sustainable transport. It provides a suite of necessary supporting infrastructure/measures and services, in line with land uses, through a range of design solutions and specific measures aimed at enhancing the physical public realm and transport network.

The approach taken to achieve a more sustainable transport sector is based on the Avoid-Shift-Improve principle as set out in National Sustainable Mobility Policy.

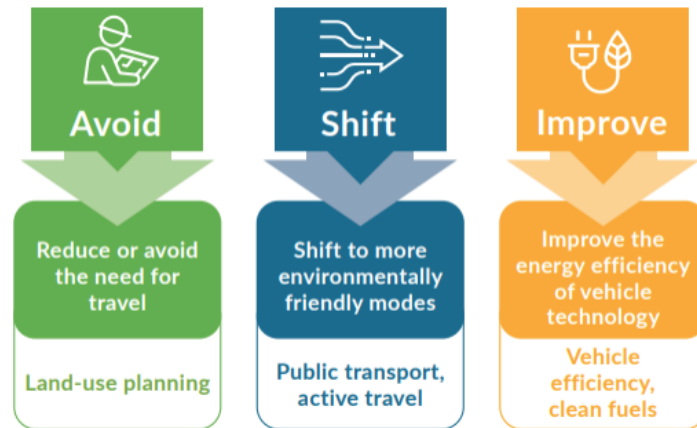


Figure 7.1 Avoid-Shift-Improve Principle (Source: National Sustainable Mobility Policy, 2022)

7.5.1 Castlebar – Overview/Context

A number of key considerations have been considered. The main issues or challenges presented are summarised below:

<p>Compact development growth:</p> <p><u>Issue(s)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> relationship between the Town Centre and periphery 	<p>Connecting the town centre with neighbourhoods and the periphery of LAP area is identified as a primary challenge. The absence of active travel facilities & suitable infrastructure impedes the use of sustainable active options. Providing physical solutions to facilitate active travel will facilitate development, in particular - by promoting compact development within the town centre as a priority focal point and then moving outwards to neighbourhood (residential, educational and employment areas) within in the plan will greatly assist in increasing the accessibility catchment of the town centre.</p>
<p>Major Roads - N5 route:</p> <p><u>Issues</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> severance car dominated environment poor junction design few crossings 	<p>The N5 route is an important north/south link. The N5 route through town is a car dominated environment and acts as an inner relief road for local traffic as well as a transit route for external traffic. The key junctions along the N5 are lacking pedestrian and cyclist facilities, with few crossing points. The N58 route through town currently presents several barriers to active travel interaction with (a) the main employment areas to the east of the town, (b) train station, and (c) many residential estates.</p> <p>The opening of the new N5 Turlough to Westport road (bypass) presents an opportunity to implement a sustainable transport network in tandem with the removal of through traffic within the town. Additionally, improving active travel infrastructure across the route will assist in creating permeable and accessible route to the town centre for active travel users.</p>
<p>Castlebar River:</p> <p><u>Issues</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Severance 	<p>The Castlebar River runs parallel to N5 route through the town and represents an important north/south link. Crossings of the river within the town centre are adequate and frequent although accessibility, connectivity and signposting is lacking. The north of the town is cut off by the river, with much fewer crossing opportunities available. The River therefore presents an issue of severance. The current route for pedestrians and cyclists for residents from west of the river to the town centre is circuitous as there is no direct access to the greenway that connects to the Town Park, thus acting as a deterrent for active travel.</p> <p>Improved linkages across the river north of the town will provide more direct connection from the west side (residential area) to the employment/industrial area along Moneen Road to the east). The provision of a link would increase connectivity and provide a level of filtered permeability encouraging modal shift to active travel modes.</p>

<p>Linkages/connectivity (general)</p> <p><u>Issues</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor connectivity throughout the plan area 	<p>The NUM¹ Audit highlighted several constraints in the existing network that discourage active travel. These include - absence of footpaths along desire lines; absence of pedestrian crossings on likely desire lines; discontinuities in footpath network; vertical separation of footpath and carriageway; inadequate width of footpath/shared surfaces; inadequate inter-visibility at crossings; lengthy pedestrian crossings; footpath condition; absence of hazard tactile paving; cycle lane pavement condition; discontinuities in cycle network; separation of cycle lanes and parking; drainage/ponding; lighting; and filtered permeability opportunities. Several of the aforementioned are classed as maintenance issues and can be readily addressed by the Council, whilst others require detailed design and planning to remedy.</p>
<p>Junctions (general)</p> <p><u>Issues</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Barriers to active travel within the town centre 	<p>Many junctions are identified as barriers to active travel due to lack of pedestrian/cyclist facilities as well as the prominence of their location(s).</p> <p>Junctions identified for improvements/interventions, are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mini Roundabout at Lucan Street and Lower Charles Street; - Roundabout at Humbert Way, N5 - Westport Road & Lannagh Road; - Roundabout at Humbert Way, N5 - Lawn Road, Spencer Street & N60 Westport Road; - Roundabout at - Dublin Road, N5 - Lawn Road & Moneen Road; - Roundabout at Stephen Garvey Way & Hopkins Road; - Roundabout at Lannagh Road & Hopkins Road & Tesco Car Park; - Junction of Newport Road & Pound Grove; - Junction of Pontoon Road & Turlough Road; - Junction of John Moore Road & Humbert Way; - Junction of N60 Breaffy Road & N84 - Station Road. <p>Redesign of these junctions to accommodate active travel modes will facilitate ease of access for pedestrians and cyclists to the town centre.</p>
<p>Car dominance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The car centric network is outdated and does not meet the needs of communities 	<p>Castlebar Town has developed with the private car being the predominant mode of transport. Car-based travel is deeply engrained in the way people navigate the area and despite the benefits of active transport, the private car continues to dominate people’s behaviour. Motor traffic is therefore a fundamental barrier to walking and cycling. Legacy of overreliance on the private car and car-based infrastructure including junctions, accessibility, circulation and parking requires re-thinking in order to adapt and prioritise transport efficiency and shift to sustainable modes.</p> <p>The removal of barriers to active travel is required in such a way that it does not cause undue effect to vehicular traffic, with a rebalancing of the network - away from the private car to sustainable modes in order to stimulate these behavioural changes.</p>

7.5.2 Main considerations

The Area Based Transport Assessment (ABTA) carried out as part of the emerging Castlebar LTP found that Castlebar town already has a 15-min walking catchment and a 10-min cycling catchment which encompasses the whole town. The existing transport network is comprised of the following –

Cycling: Cycle facilities are generally sub-standard; discontinuous networks; poor cycling facilities; poor pavement & road conditions, obstructions (parked cars), termination of cycle facilities stop in advance of a junction.

Walking: Poor pedestrian facilities. several major junctions are lacking pedestrian facilities, no crossings provided along desire lines, narrow footpaths and abrupt endings.

Bus: There is currently no bus network within the Town. A local link service is in operation for vulnerable population; good service connection to Castlebar from neighbouring towns.

¹ Non-Motorised User Accessibility Audit (NUM) carried out as part of the emerging Castlebar LTP

A principle aim therefore is to deliver the necessary on-street infrastructure to provide continuous and consistent Active Travel Links (incl. commuting, leisure, tourist and family cycling) and improved accessibility for pedestrians. In this regard, improvements to the transport network is aimed at promoting accessibility and permeability and enhanced, safer connectivity both within the town and its wider area in order to facilitate local trips by bicycle and by foot. The principle aims include:

- Promotion of modal shift to sustainable modes,
- Develop an integrated transport system,
- Maintain and improve reliability of journey times on key routes,
- Accessibility to all population cohorts,
- Provide a transport system that supports the economy and growing population of the town,
- Protect and enhance the built & natural environment.

A number of key objectives have come to the forefront, all of which focus on improving the transport network. It is intended that movement and circulation in Castlebar can, in part, be improved by focussing on the following key areas:

Cycle Network:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop a connected, continuous cycle network including greenway, primary and secondary feeder routes to residential, education, employment, health care, town centre and community centres. ▪ Upgrades & repairs to day-to-day routes between residential and local education, employment and community facilities. ▪ Enhancement of existing infrastructure i.e. new pedestrian links to address severance caused by N5 & Castlebar River. ▪ Improve filtered permeability via laneways and opening up of cul-de-sacs i.e. use of laneways & opening up of cul-de-sacs to promote/facilitate cycling activity, increase directness & connectivity. ▪ Provide dedicated cycle facilities at the following junctions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - N5 & Moneen - N5 & Spencer Street - N5 & Lannagh - Stephen Garvey Way & Hopkins Road & TESCO - Hopkins Road & Lannagh Road. ▪ Provide a safe & secure covered cycle park within the t/centre & at major trip attractors ▪ Charging Infrastructure within the town centre area ▪ Improved or new public lighting, security and signage for cycling routes.

Public Transport Network:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Improve routing & frequency of existing bus services. Expansion of 'Local Link' bus service to include short distance trips within the town area. ▪ Improve frequency & connectivity of existing rail services. ▪ Improve integration between train station, town centre and local bus routes. ▪ Enhance connectivity of Castlebar train station by providing improved active travel connections and 'Park and Ride' infrastructure ▪ Provide bus priority infrastructure in the t/centre. ▪ Improve transport stops ▪ Provide/facilitate convenient access from residential, employment, education, healthcare and town centre to public transport stops ▪ Develop a bus interchange at Stephen Garvey Way i.e. covered, secure waiting area & welfare facilities.

Pedestrian Network:

- Develop a series of connected, continuous routes to connect main origin and destinations via a functional pedestrian network with adequate crossing facilities.
- Upgrades & repairs to “day to day” key routes between residential areas and local education, employment and community facilities.
- Enhance existing infrastructure by providing new pedestrian links to overcome severance caused by the N5 and Castlebar River.
- Improve filtered permeability via laneways and opening up of cul-de-sacs i.e. use of laneways & opening up of cul-de-sacs to promote pedestrian activity, increase directness & connectivity
- Improve safety for pedestrians and vulnerable road users by improving crossing points. In particular along the N5, N84, Stephen Garvey Way/Hopkins Road, Lannagh Road and Westport. Road.
- Improve accessibility for vulnerable population cohort within the Town Centre area priority parking, handrails at gradients, seating, footpath widening, public toilets and public bins.
- Improved public lighting, signage and security/surveillance along walking routes

Road Network:

- Traffic management measures within the town centre to reduce unnecessary vehicular trips.
- Provide ‘Phase 1’ of the Northern Orbital Ring Road to improve connectivity from the north of the town to the N5
- Provide Electric Vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure in the Town Centre
- Maintain adequate vehicular capacity and access
- Provide recommendations on future road schemes required to meet capacity requirements and changing travel patterns.

7.5.3 Concept

The primary strategy is a ‘centre out approach’, based on a functional and accessible active travel network from the town centre outwards. Short trips (less than 2km) account for approximately 40% of car-based trips. By encouraging active travel for short journey trips within the Plan area a significant portion of unnecessary journeys can be reduced.

Evidence suggests that the town centre area has a relatively good standard of accessibility for active travel, consisting of a permeable network augmented by the Castlebar Urban Greenway. However, it must be capitalised on in order to create physical environments that incentivises mode shift, by providing enhanced active travel facilities (mobility hubs, frequent bike-parking locations, etc.) and regular maintenance.

Increasing uptake in active travel trips from surrounding residential areas will be encouraged by providing active travel network improvements. This will assist in both reducing reliance on the private car and traffic volume within the town core. In addition, enabling the delivery of public realm upgrades and the rebalancing of streets in favour of ‘people’, with an enhanced active travel environment is considered to be fundamental.

The approach also seeks to improve the connectivity and accessibility to the town centre from the periphery, which focuses on providing the appropriate infrastructural interventions necessary to offer the greatest degree of accessibility to the largest catchment.

In addition, improving physical links between the town centre / commercial areas and residential areas with active travel infrastructure will create the required permeability and accessibility and remove barriers to appropriately serve active modes. The approach also promotes the removing of blockages to active travel that cause severance by providing high quality continuous pedestrian and cyclist facilities through junctions and crossings at desire lines.

The recommended measures to promote active travel within the town centre include the provision of improvements to the public realm; mobility hubs; park and stride facilities and bike share.

7.5.4 Strategy

The emerging Castlebar LTP will be comprised of a number of schemes, which cover the overall development of transport in Castlebar. The schemes have been developed to achieve the objectives set for each transport mode (i.e. walking, cycling, public transport, road network) accompanied by a set of goals for each mode category. Each scheme is comprised of a schedule of physical measures aimed at facilitating shift away from unnecessary car-based travel to more sustainable modes of travel.

Ultimately, these measures are aimed at ensuring that new development can occur in line with compact, place-based, integrated development, with emphasis on active and sustainable travel patterns. Individual projects will be subjected to public consultation, environmental assessments, heritage studies, relevant statutory procedures, and consultation with the relevant statutory stakeholders. A general overview can be seen in Figures 7.2 and 7.3 below.

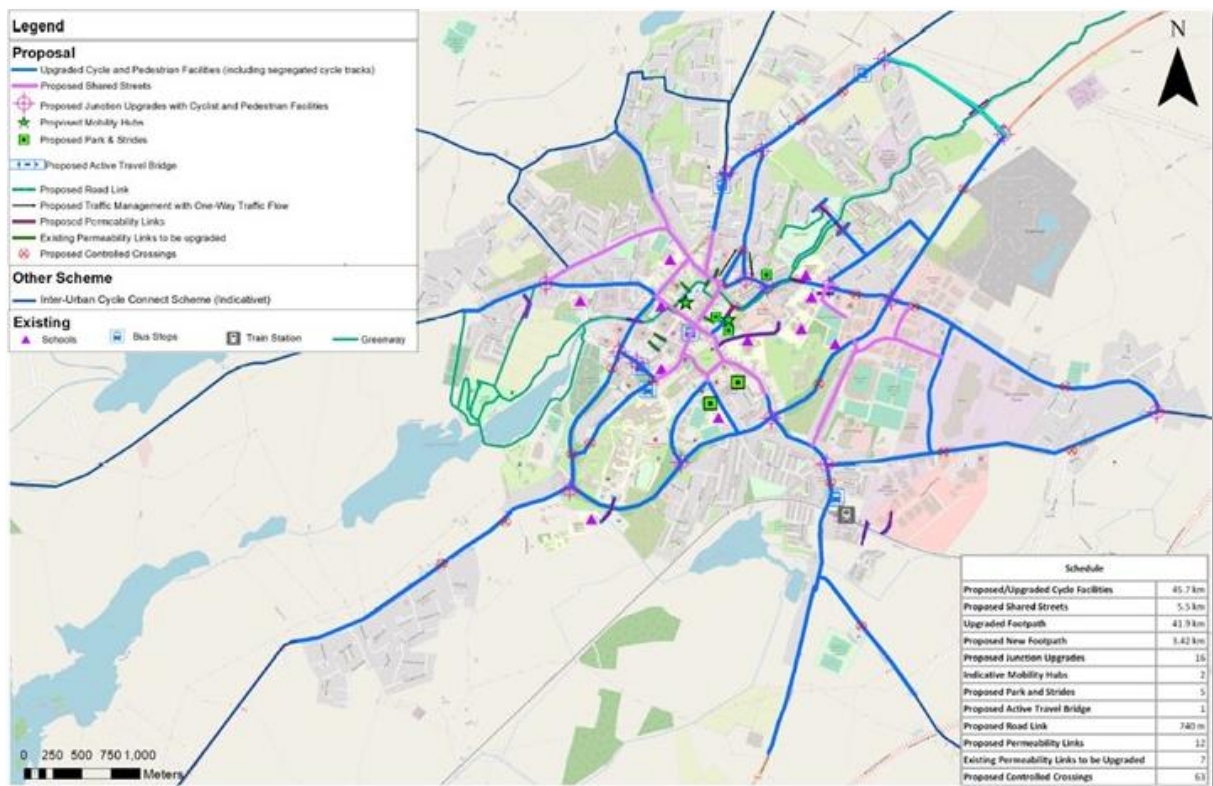


Figure 7.2 Overview of Scheme proposal (Source: Emerging Draft Castlebar Local Transport Plan)

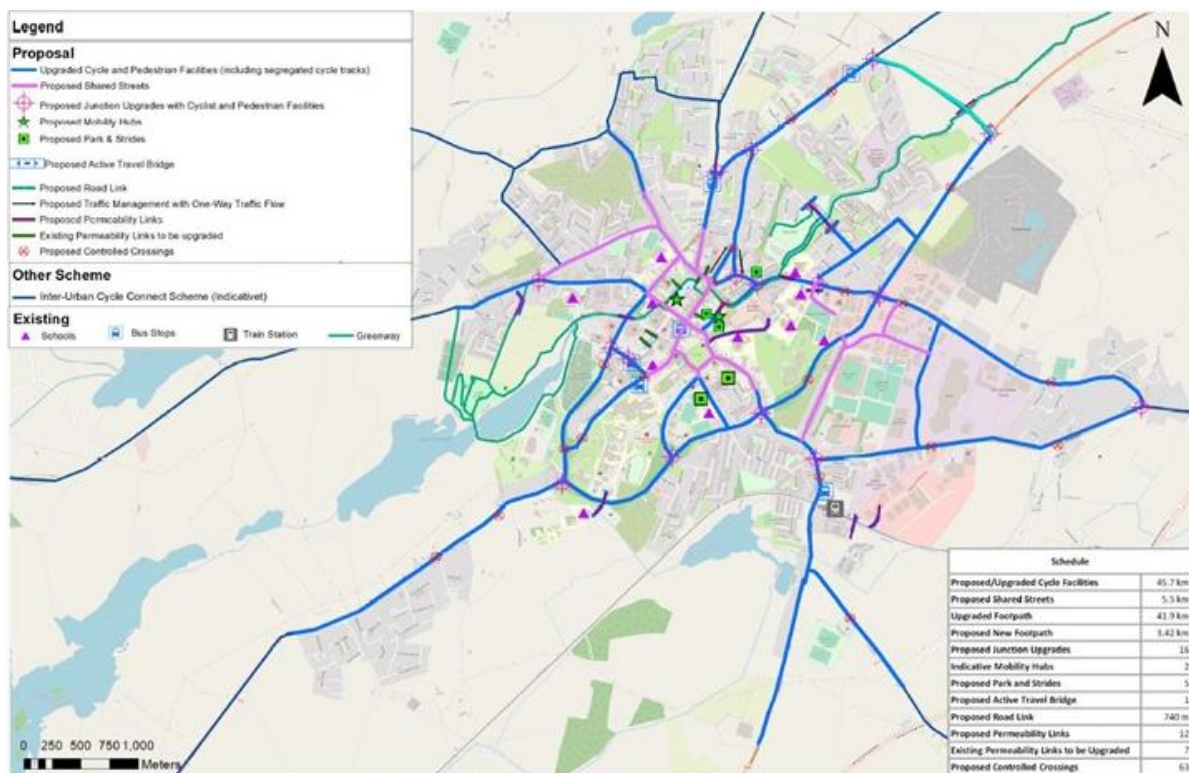


Figure 7.3 Proposed Local Transport Plan Schemes (Source: Emerging Draft Castlebar Local Transport Plan)

The physical infrastructure as per the overall LTP Proposal, will provide Castlebar town and environs with the following travel and transport infrastructure:

Scheme Infrastructure/Measures	Timeline			Total (quantity)
	Short	Medium	Concurrent/ Parallel	
Proposed/Upgraded Cycle Facilities (km per direction)	27.6km	13.8km	4.3km	45.7km
Upgraded Pedestrian Facilities (km)	26.9km	12.3km	4.3km	43.5km
Proposed Pedestrian Facilities (km)	1.92km	1.5km	-	3.42km
Proposed Junction Upgrades	8	7	1	16
Proposed Controlled Crossings	34	24	2	60
Upgraded Permeability Link	-	-	7	7
Proposed Permeability Link	2	1	9	12
Proposed Active Travel Bridge	-	-	1	1
Proposed Park & Stride	5	-	-	5
Proposed Mobility Hub	1	1	-	2
Road link (Phase 1 Northern Orbital Ring Road)		0.74km		0.74km

Table 7.1 Schedule of Proposals

7.6 Modal Share

The Mayo County Development Plan provides figures for workplace zone daytime population and percentage for modal share for Castlebar, which indicates a doubling of the daytime population (54.6% population change). The private car is the main mode of transport in Castlebar is 59.35%, which is slightly below the national average, with car passenger (car sharing) and walking well above the national average. All other modes of transport, including public transport, are well below the national average. Therefore, a modal shift is needed towards sustainable transport options to meet our national targets of reducing (a) carbon emissions by 51% to 2030, and (b) a 20% reduction in vehicle kilometres travelled. Active travel and a modal shift towards increased public transport usage is crucial for Ireland to meet our carbon emission target(s).

The emerging Castlebar LTP will provide baseline data (2016 Census data), as well as target ambitions to reduce car-based trips. A set of targets is provided for the reduction of car-based travel demand to other sustainable modes, estimated on a 30% and 20% (to allow for variables). Table 7.1 below shows the current modal share and mode share ambitions up to 2029. Table 7.3 below indicates the potential for carbon reduction per mode. Table 7.2 below shows the estimated potential shift (by mode) resulting from the delivery of each individual proposal.

Mode	Current Mode Share	Mode Share Ambitions to 2029	
	As per 2016 Census	Shift from car-based trips (local journeys)	
		30% shift (based on delivery of schemes)	20% shift (based on delivery of schemes)
Private Car	66%	44% (-22%)	50% (-16%)
Cycle	3%	10% (+7%)	8% (+5%)
Walk	29%	40% (+11%)	36% (+7%)
Public Transport	3%	6% (+3%)	6% (+3%)

Table 7.2 Current Mode Share and Modal Shift Ambitions to 2029 (Source: Emerging Draft Castlebar Local Transport Plan)

	30% Mode Shift to Sustainable Modes	20% Mode Shift to Sustainable Modes
Increase in Cycle Mode Share	1504	1003
Increase in Walking Mode Share	2256	1504
Decrease in Private Car Mode Share	3760	2507
Carbon Reduction	621 t per annum	330 t per annum

Table 7.3 Mode Shift Impact per Mode & potential for reduction in carbon emissions (Source: Emerging Draft Castlebar Local Transportation Plan)

Scheme	Trips in Catchment (2016 Base Year)		Private Car Trips Remaining with		Increase in Sustainable Mode Trips with	
	All Modes	Private Car	30% Mode Shift to Sustainable Modes	20% Mode Shift to Sustainable Modes	30% Mode Shift to Sustainable Modes	20% Mode Shift to Sustainable Modes
1	5124	3331	2331	2664	999	666
2	2896	1696	1188	1357	509	339
3	2046	1084	759	868	325	217
4	1603	946	662	757	284	189
5	62	52	36	42	16	10
6	9653	5423	3796	4339	1627	1085
Total	21384	12533	8773	10026	3760	2507

Table 7.4 Mode Shift Impact per Scheme (Source: Emerging Draft Castlebar Local Transportation Plan)

7.6.1 Monitoring & Review Castlebar LTP

The performance of the Castlebar LTP will be measured in relation to the progress made towards its objectives, evidence of increased use of sustainable modes of transport, evidence of reduced reliance on private car travel and appraisals for each Proposal (1 to 6). Each of the LTP Proposals have a set of indicators and targets and indicative timeline.

7.7 Roads

Castlebar is a Key Town in the settlement hierarchy for County Mayo, and a linked Economic Growth Cluster with Westport. Both the local and strategic transport network is therefore vital to the movement of people and goods. Castlebar is served by a strong road network, of national primary, national secondary and local roads. Castlebar has benefitted from recent investment in road infrastructure. The N5 bypass, a dual carriageway linking Castlebar to Westport, marks a significant road improvement, which reinforces the status of the Castlebar-Westport Economic Growth Cluster, with commuting time between both settlements less than 10 minutes. This investment will also serve to reduce through traffic and redirecting local through-traffic.

7.7.1 Strategic Context

The connectivity provided by the N5, N84 (National Primary Roads) and the N60 (National Secondary Road), in addition to the R378, R310 and R311 regional roads, provide a good strategic links to the national and regional road network. The maintenance of these roads is a priority to ensure high-level of functionality/service, safety, accessibility and connectivity to the national and regional road network is upheld.

The Plan seeks to safeguard the development and carrying capacity of the national road infrastructure along existing key routes such as the N5 (as extended), N84 and N60 route corridors. New development along these routes will be required to accord with policies of the Mayo County Development Plan to safeguard routes from development that would compromise safety, integrity or

capacity. Development proposals which may affect national roads within or adjacent to the Plan boundary must have regard to the requirements of the Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines (DTTS, 2012) and the Traffic and Transport Assessment Guidelines (TII, 2014). The Council is committed to continue to work in partnership with the Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) and other stakeholders in the design process and the delivery of this route and any future road schemes.

7.7.2 Local Context:

The Council is committed to improving better connectivity, movement and circulation within Castlebar. A number of key Road projects are proposed in the Plan area, which if delivered will facilitate vehicular movement away from the main built-up areas and reducing unnecessary through-traffic.

A Northern Orbital Ring Road aims at providing a regional route, by-passing the built-up area to the north and west of the town. The route runs from the immediate edge of the Plan boundary on the Westport side of the town and connects to the N5 east of the town. A specific section of this route (c. 0.74km) - 'Phase 1' of the Northern Orbital Ring Road has been prioritised by the Castlebar LTP. This section provides an immediate link between the Turlough Rd and the N5 which will also include essential active travel infrastructure.

A new Inner Relief Road linking the R311 to R310 from Pound Road (R311) to the R310 (Pontoon Rd).

These projects are listed in Table 7.5 below.

Roads Projects*	Description
Northern Orbital Ring Road (ref North Castlebar Connector)	Northern Orbital Ring Road is an orbital regional route around the northern and western part of the town. This route will remove a significant amount of traffic from the town centre and serve as a multiple bypass as well as a local connector route.
Phase 1 of the Northern Orbital Ring Road. (linking Turlough Rd – N5)	Phase 1 of the Northern Orbital Ring Road consists of a 0.74km section of road between N5 and Turlough Road via two signalised junctions. The road link will also have segregated cycle tracks and footpaths along the stretch and across the junctions. See Scheme 4 of the Castlebar LTP for indicative route location.
Inner Relief Road (R311-R310)	A new relief road (R311 to R310) which runs from the Pound Road/R311 (east of Glenfort residential estate) north/eastward to the R310 (Pontoon Rd) via an intersection at Rathbawn Road and continued through the Watersville area.

Table 7.5 Roads Projects

***Note:** The exact location and route of these roads are subject to consultation, technical and environmental assessment and therefore will likely vary, as such the road location/corridor is indicative only.

7.8 Parking

Parking within Castlebar town centre is well served by surface car parks, all within a close range of the main shopping locations - at Spenser St, Castle St, Mill Lane (west of Market St), Supervalu/Pennies car park (New Antrim Street), Tesco/Dunnes Stores/Shaws/Boots car parks (Hopkins Rd), Aldi/Next car park (Lannagh Rd), and Pavillion Rd. On-street parking is also available, though limited. Most of the car park facilities in the town centre are fee paying and / or time restricted (generally up to two hours limit).

While it is necessary to have parking provision within the town, the devotion of large portions of the town centre to surface parking requires a new perspective, in line with the overarching objectives of

this Plan, in particular - regeneration within the town centre, compact development and transport planning. A number of town centre Opportunity Sites have been identified within the core area, which are located on or adjacent to existing surface car-park areas. The development of these sites will potentially reduce the extent of surface car-parking available into the future.

Whilst there is a focus on active travel mode and shift away from car-based trips, the development of alternative parking solutions and measures as the need to cater for private car parking in the town centre will continue. These measures include provision of 'Park and Stride' locations and facilities at the edge of the town centre to cater for the long-distance trips into Castlebar. Such facilities encourage car commuters to switch to alternative modes of transport (i.e. walking & cycling), which is particularly effective for those who commute to school or employment centres.

7.9 Public Transport

7.9.1 Bus

The provision of a north/south and east/west linear bus routes incorporating two bus interchange stops at Stephen Garvey Way and at the Old Westport Road (Mayo University Hospital) would facilitate an inbound and outbound interchange. In addition, a mobility hub in Mill Streetcar park is included as part of the proposed bus network. See Figure 7.4 and Figure 7.5 below. Two bus routes are proposed - a north/south route and an east/west route covering a distance of c.1.9km. The routes are bi-directional and include 50 stops (approx. 12 stops for each route in each direction). The distribution of bus stops is indicative only with a proposed frequency of 1 bus every 30minutes. A local bus service within the town will provide a new transport alternative to residents. As such, the delivery of a local public bus service has the highest potential to encourage shift to sustainable modes.

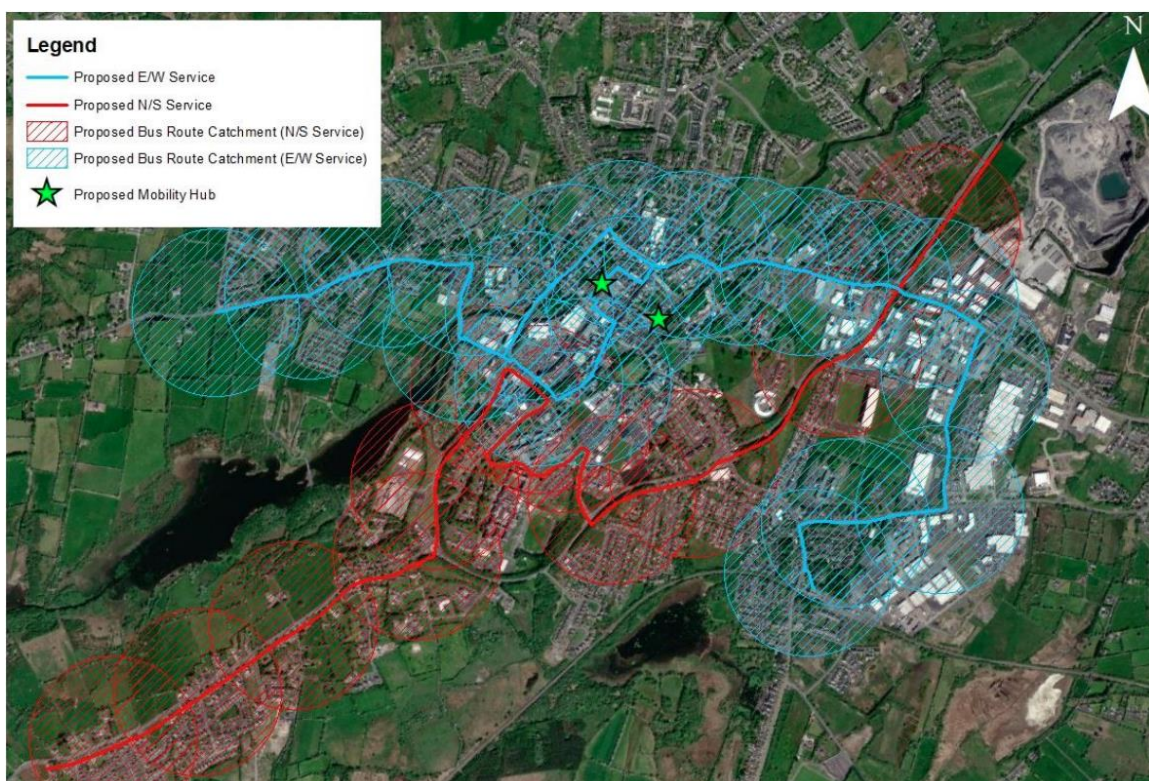


Figure 7.4 Proposed Bus Routes 300m catchment (Source: Emerging Draft Castlebar Local Transport Plan).

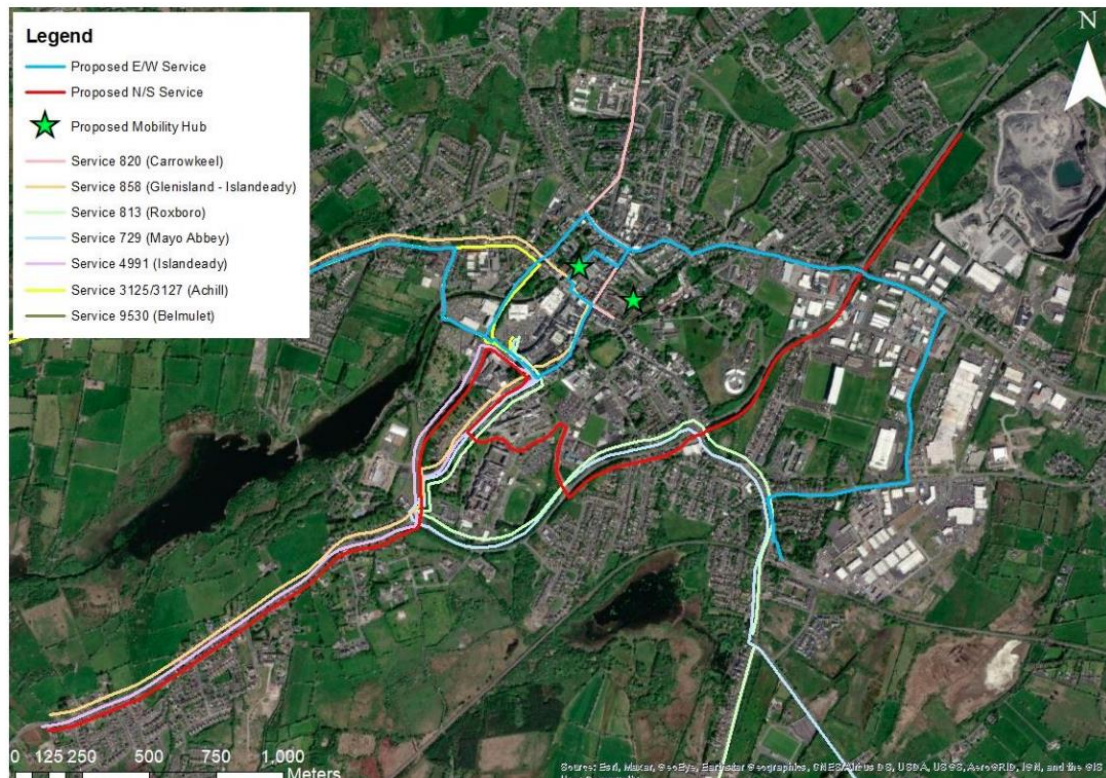


Figure 7.5 Proposed Bus Routes 300m catchment (Source: Emerging Draft Castlebar Local Transport Plan).

7.9.2 Rail

Castlebar is served by mainline rail, with the train station located on Station Road, a short distance from the town centre. At present, the low frequency of rail services in Mayo, renders rail travel an unviable transport option for daily commuters to Castlebar. Iarnród Éireann in their strategic policy document “Rail Vision 2030: The Future of Rail Transport in Ireland” refers to the importance of the Dublin-Westport/Ballina service and the important role of rail in servicing the interconnectivity between the key towns of Mayo.

Mayo County Council supports the use of the rail network as a sustainable mode of transport and realises that the increase in the frequency of commuter services on the mainline rail network between Castlebar and other towns along the rail network in tandem with connecting bus services would benefit shift away from car-based journeys. The Council supports upgrading of the existing railway station and associated commuter services.

In addition, the Council will continue to engage with Iarnród Éireann to explore and encourage development of rail freight services and facilitates, including for potential for a freight hub in Castlebar.

7.10 Movement and Transport Policy & Objectives

Sustainable Mobility Policies

It is a Policy of the Council to:

MTP 1	Improve accessibility and movement within Castlebar, reduce dependency on private car transport, increase permeability in the town, and encourage the use of energy efficient forms of transport through the promotion of walking, cycling and public transport.
MTP 2	Engage and co-operate with the Department of Transport, National Transport Authority (NTA), Transport Infrastructure Ireland, Irish Rail, Local Link and other stakeholders to improve the provision of public transport and public transport facilities in Castlebar.
MTP 3	Ensure that new developments are designed to comply with Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (2019) including making provision for pedestrian and cycle infrastructure and enhancing connectivity and accessibility to the town.
MTP 4	Improve accessibility and movement within Castlebar, reduce dependency on private car transport, increase permeability in the town, and encourage the use of energy efficient forms of transport through the promotion of walking, cycling and public transport.
MTP 5	Support the provision of cycling infrastructure, bicycle parking facilities and electric vehicle charging points in the town centre, in accordance with the recommendations of the Castlebar Local Transport Plan (as adopted) and subject to traffic and pedestrian safety.
MTP 6	Make provisions for the use of electric vehicles through a significant increase in the provision of clearly and exclusively designated electric car charging points on public and private land in partnership with ESB and other relevant stakeholders and landowners.

Sustainable Mobility Objectives

It is an Objective of the Council to:

MTO 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Encourage and facilitate the maintenance and further development of the public footpath network, walking and cycling routes and associated infrastructure within the town and where possible the retrofitting of cycle and pedestrian routes into the existing urban road network. b) Promote and facilitate the enhancement of the public realm in order to create attractive, cohesive and well-connected places in order to encourage walking and cycling as more viable forms of transport within the town.
MTO 2	Seek the provision of workplace mobility plans for proposals for large scale employment and the development of Smarter Travel Initiatives as set in Smarter Travel: A Sustainable Transport Future 2009-2020 (or any replacement thereof).
MTO 3	Promote sustainable, compact development by ensuring that all proposals for residential and mixed-use developments, including infill and brownfield, incorporate provisions for pedestrian and cyclist activity and associated facilities that will integrate into the existing road/street network and proposed active travel network in the town.
MTO 4	Identify appropriate locations on public lands in partnership with ESB for the provision of battery charging infrastructure for electric vehicles in Castlebar.
MTO 5	To monitor and review the progress of the Castlebar Local Transport Plan in line with the Monitoring & Review strategy set out in this Plan, and in accordance with its stated goals and objectives.

Roads Policies

It is a Policy of the Council to:

MTP 7	Ensure new development proposals comply with Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines for Local Authorities (DTTS, 2013) and safeguard the integrity, capacity and safety of national roads.
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Road Objectives

It is an Objective of the Council to:

MTO 6	Seek to progress the Road projects, listed in Table 7.5 subject to environmental assessments.
MTO 7	Support the provision of new roads infrastructure by ensuring that the lands along the indicative routes* (as listed below) are protected by keeping them free from development that would undermine the delivery of these projects. (a) Northern Orbital Ring Road, and (b) Inner Relief Road (R311-310) *these routes are indicative only and are will be subject to change

Castlebar Local Transport Plan Objectives

It is an Objective of the Council to:

MTO 8	Support the implementation of all measures and actions set out in the Castlebar Local Transport Plan once completed and adopted by the council in accordance with proper planning and sustainable development.
MTO 9	Support the: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reduction in dependency on the private car• Discouragement of vehicular through traffic• Enhancement the public realm through traffic management and transport interventions• Development of public transport services.• Provision of transport demand management measures

Car Parking Objectives

It is an Objective of the Council to:

MTO 8	Explore and provide 'Park and Stride' facilities and Mobility Hubs at appropriate locations in the town, in accordance with the recommendations of the Castlebar LTP (once adopted) and in partnership with the relevant stakeholder.
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MTO 9

Facilitate the provision of:

- a) Public car parks in its own role and/or in partnership with third parties, in its control of on-street parking and off-street parking to provide for short term shopping and business parking requirements and for the needs of local residents, rather than long term commuter parking.
- b) Investigate the possibility of providing coach parking within the Plan Area.

Chapter 8 BUILT ENVIRONMENT

8.1 Strategic Aim:

The strategic aim of this chapter is to recognise and enhance the unique identity, character and built heritage of Castlebar, to improve quality of life through the application of healthy placemaking, underpinned by good urban design with the creation of attractive public spaces that are vibrant, distinctive, safe and accessible and which promote and facilitate positive social interaction.

8.2 Introduction

Built heritage is an intrinsic part of our heritage providing an opportunity to learn about the past, reinforce the sense of place, and act as guardians for future generations. The rich built heritage of Castlebar is an integral part of the town's attractiveness and is rooted in the early Norman, Christian and late medieval periods. The town was a Norman stronghold with the town named after a Norman adventurer called De Barrie, who founded a castle here in 1235 (Castle Barry). In recent years, significant urban realm works have been completed in Castlebar, which have enhanced the quality and attractiveness of public spaces in the town centre.

8.3 Built Heritage Conservation

The Castlebar Architectural Heritage Study 2000 carried out as part of the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage, highlighted features of architectural importance in the town, including buildings, features and spaces of national, regional and local importance. Castlebar benefits from a legacy of 18th, 19th and 20th century buildings, including townhouses on Ellison Street, civic and institutional buildings, such as the Military barracks, and ecclesiastical buildings, such as the Church of Ireland (Christchurch) on The Mall and the Catholic Church on Upper Chapel Street. The town has also inherited a Town Centre street pattern that has informed the layout of the subsequent expansion of the town.

The architecture of these buildings and the spaces between them such as Rock Square, the Mall and Market Square lend attractiveness to the town centre. The institutional and civic buildings provide historic links to the past which contribute to the town's identity as the County Town and as an important centre for public services and administration.

The traditional shop fronts in Castlebar are also important to the architectural heritage of the town. The Council will encourage the retention of shop fronts according to the Council's guidance (see Development Management Standard 5.6, Vol. 2 of Mayo County Development Plan 2022-2028). New shop fronts will also be expected to respect the traditional character of the town.

8.4 Architectural Heritage and Record of Protected Structures

Architectural Heritage is protected through the Record of Protected Structures. The Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), places an obligation on local authorities to include objectives for the protection of structures, or parts of structures, which are of special architectural, historical,

archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest. Archaeological structures may, in some situations, be considered as architectural heritage and, therefore, may appear on both the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP), Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) and the Record of Protected Structures (RPS).

The Record of Protected Structures, which relate to the Castlebar Town and Environs area merit protection and enhancement and in many cases have also been identified by the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH), which provides a detailed description of the survey of the structures.

8.5 Architectural Conservation Area(s)

An Architectural Conservation Area (ACA) is defined as a place, area, group of structures or townscape that is of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest or value, or contributes to the appreciation of protected structures. An ACA designation aims to protect this area within the town, that has special significance. Currently there is no designated ACA(s) in Castlebar.

Having regard to the wealth of architectural heritage within the town centre area, it is an objective over the lifetime of the plan to identify and designated ACAs, in order to ensure that future development within and proximate to these architecturally sensitive areas is carried out with due consideration for the built heritage and character of the ACA areas. Mayo County Council will examine the following town centre locations for their potential to be designated as ACAs over the plan period:

- Chapel Street ACA (Chapel Street)
- The Mall ACA (The Mall, The Green and Rock Square)
- Historic Core ACA (Market Street, Ellison Street, Mountain View Road and Bridge Street)

8.6 Archaeological Heritage

Archaeological remains and deposits can advance the understanding of how Castlebar has developed over the centuries and increase the knowledge of its past. It will, therefore, be important to preserve the archaeological remains within any future developments, either by protecting/preserving archaeological remains in situ or by removing and recording them.

The town and environs is rich in archaeological history, with an abundance of enclosures, crannogs, earthworks and later stone fortifications around Lough Lannagh, while a large part of the town centre is designated as a single protected site. The Archaeological Survey of Ireland database at www.archaeology.ie contains an interactive map/search facility that provides access to all records of the Archaeological Survey of Ireland (ASI) and should be consulted prior to the development of land within the plan area.

Mayo County Council recognises that there may be important archaeological deposits located outside the Zone of Archaeological Potential. Where such deposits are uncovered through development, the Council will have regard to the recommendations of the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government in promoting their preservation and recording. The Council may request that

archaeological field evaluation take place as part of the application or before development proposals are implemented, where there is evidence that archaeological remains are present.

8.7 Placemaking

The built environment not only includes buildings but also the spaces between buildings, such as town squares and parks, sensory parks, community gardens, and the physical infrastructure that support human activity, such as transportation and utility networks. The Plan aims to improve the quality of the built fabric of Castlebar by applying the principles of placemaking. Placemaking is multidimensional and represents the connection between people and place. Castlebar is fortunate in already having a high-quality public realm, with distinctive features and structures such as the Mall and the Military Barracks. The Plan will aim to protect and further enhance the distinctive character of Castlebar and provide a safe, accessible and attractive built environment in the town.

8.8 Built Environment Policy & Objectives

Built Heritage Conservation Policies	
It is a Policy of the Council to:	
BEP 1	Maintain, conserve and protect the architectural quality, character and scale of the Castlebar.
BEP 2	Encourage high quality and well-designed buildings, structures, public spaces and streets and support and promote healthy placemaking and quality of life.
BEP 3	Protect the town centre by ensuring all new developments are compatible with the existing character and visual amenity of Castlebar.
BEP 4	Encourage residential uses on the upper floors of town centre commercial properties, where appropriate, and to encourage the retention of residential use except where an alternative use has been established, to maintain and enhance the overall vitality of the town centre area.
BEP 5	Have regard to Mayo Shopfronts Design Guide for shopfronts and signs and to encourage the use of traditional shopfront designs and materials and signs.

Built Heritage Conservation Objectives	
It is an Objective of the Council to:	
BEO 1	Prohibit the use of plastic and neon lit shop signs within the town core and at other locations where the planning authority deem them unsuitable.

Architectural Heritage and Record of Protected Structures Policy	
It is a Policy of the Council to:	

BEP 6	Encourage the rehabilitation, renovation, climate-proofing and re-use of existing protected structures and vernacular buildings within the plan area, where appropriate, over the demolition of same and new-build on-site
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Architectural Heritage and Record of Protected Structures Objectives

It is an Objective of the Council to:

BEO 2	Protect all structures in Castlebar that are listed in the County Mayo Record of Protected Structures.
BEO 3	Preserve the form and character of the protected structures by ensuring that any proposed sub-division of protected structures for multiple residential units does not impair the character of the protected structure.
BEO4	Ensure that any alterations or interventions to protected structures shall be executed to a high conservation standard in order to protect their significance or value. Any applications for development of protected structures shall be accompanied by an assessment carried out by an accredited conservation architect, in accordance with the Councils requirements.
BEO5	Identify places of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest, and to define them as Architectural Conservation Areas over the lifetime of the Plan and to undertake an assessment to inform the potential ACA designation for the following areas: Chapel Street, The Mall, Historic Core or any other special character areas considered by the Planning Authority worthy of such protection in the town.

Archaeological Heritage Policy

It is a Policy of the Council to:

BEP 7	Support and promote the protection, appropriate management and sympathetic enhancement of the archaeological heritage within the Plan area, in particular by implementing the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and the National Monuments Act 1930 (as amended).
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Archaeological Heritage Objective

It is an Objective of the Council to:

BEO 6	Protect and preserve in situ (or upon agreement preservation by record) items of archaeological interest provided for on the Sites and Monuments Record (www.archeology.ie) from inappropriate development that would adversely affect and/or detract from interpretation and setting of these sites.
BEO 7	Ensure proposals contribute to the protection and preservation of the archaeological value of sites including underwater sites associated with the Castlebar River, Lough Lannagh & Saleen Lough.

Placemaking & Views & Prospects Policies

It is a Policy of the Council to:

BEP 8	Encourage and facilitate improvements to the physical fabric and environment of the town, including streetscape, street furniture, landscaping (hard and soft), signage and wirescape, while recognising that both private and public developments can contribute to effective public realm.
BEP 9	Promote the regeneration of Castlebar town centre by making better use of underutilised land and buildings, particularly within the existing built up areas to achieve compact growth.

Chapter 9 NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

9.1 Strategic Aim

Protect, conserve, enhance and sustain the natural environment of Castlebar and promote climate adaptation, placemaking and enhance biodiversity through promotion of green infrastructure for future generations.

9.2 Introduction

The natural environment includes those spaces outside of the built environment such as open spaces, lakes, rivers and agricultural land. Castlebar town and its environs are located within a rolling drumlin landscape, containing several significant elements of the natural environment. Lough Lannagh and Saleen Lough are located adjacent to the town centre and the Castlebar River flows through the centre of the town. These natural features are supplemented by a range of public open spaces and parks, significant institutional lands and playing pitches. They provide habitats for a variety of plant and animal species and combine to form an attractive physical environment that distinguish Castlebar from most other urban centres of its size.

The natural environment also provides direct and indirect benefits to the population of Castlebar and its surrounds. They are places where people can engage in recreational activities such as walking, swimming, water related activities and playing formal and informal field sports. These areas also provide a visual amenity that enhances the attractiveness of the town as a place in which to live and work.

9.3 Natural Heritage and Designated Sites

Our natural heritage includes the variety of life we see around us every day, often referred to as biodiversity. Biodiversity includes everything from trees to weeds, from mammals to birds, from coast to countryside. A wide range of economic and social benefits result from the protection of environmental quality and biodiversity. For example, biodiversity forms the basis of our landscapes, provides for food and clean water supplies, nutrient recycling and coastal protection. It also contributes climate stability and human well-being.

Castlebar supports a surprisingly wide range of wildlife habitats and species of local, or even national, conservation interest. Birds nest in trees, shrubs, or under the eaves of buildings. Hedgerows support mammals, insects and wild flowering plants. Bats roost in buildings, trees and underneath old bridges. Fungi, lichens and mosses grow on both wood and stone, while waterways support otters, frogs, newts, insects, waterfowl and fish. The wildlife in a built-up area may well be hidden or may inhabit areas at the edge of the town.

Most noticeably, Lough Lannagh and Saleen Lough are located within the plan area close to the town centre. The wetlands of Lough Lannagh and Lough Saleen support a rich natural biodiversity of both flora and fauna. The Castlebar River, forming part of the Moy Catchment, drains these loughs and flows through the centre of the town.

The Castlebar River supports important salmonid populations and provides a direct pathway to the River Moy Special Area of Conservation (SAC). Therefore, it is important that the ecological status of

the Castlebar River is improved to support associated flora and fauna. Moreover, it is also important that the ecological status of the Castlebar River, and its associated surface waterbody units, are improved to ensure the river meets its Water Framework Directive environmental objective of at least good status by 2027. Mayo County Council supports measures to mitigate identified significant pressures and issues adversely impacting on the ecological and biological status of the Castlebar River.

9.3.1 Designated Sites

Mayo County Council recognises the importance of protecting designated areas of natural and heritage value. These designations include:

- Special Protection Areas (SPA)
- Special Area of Conservation (SAC)
- Natural Heritage Area (NHA)
- Proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHAs)
- Flora Protection Order

There are no European designated (EU Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC) Special Areas of Conservation or Special Protection Areas located within the plan area. There is also no natural heritage area or proposed natural heritage area within the plan area. The Castlebar River, however, is a tributary of the River Moy Special Area of Conservation (Site Code: 002298). Therefore, a hydrological pathway exists between the plan area and a European Site.

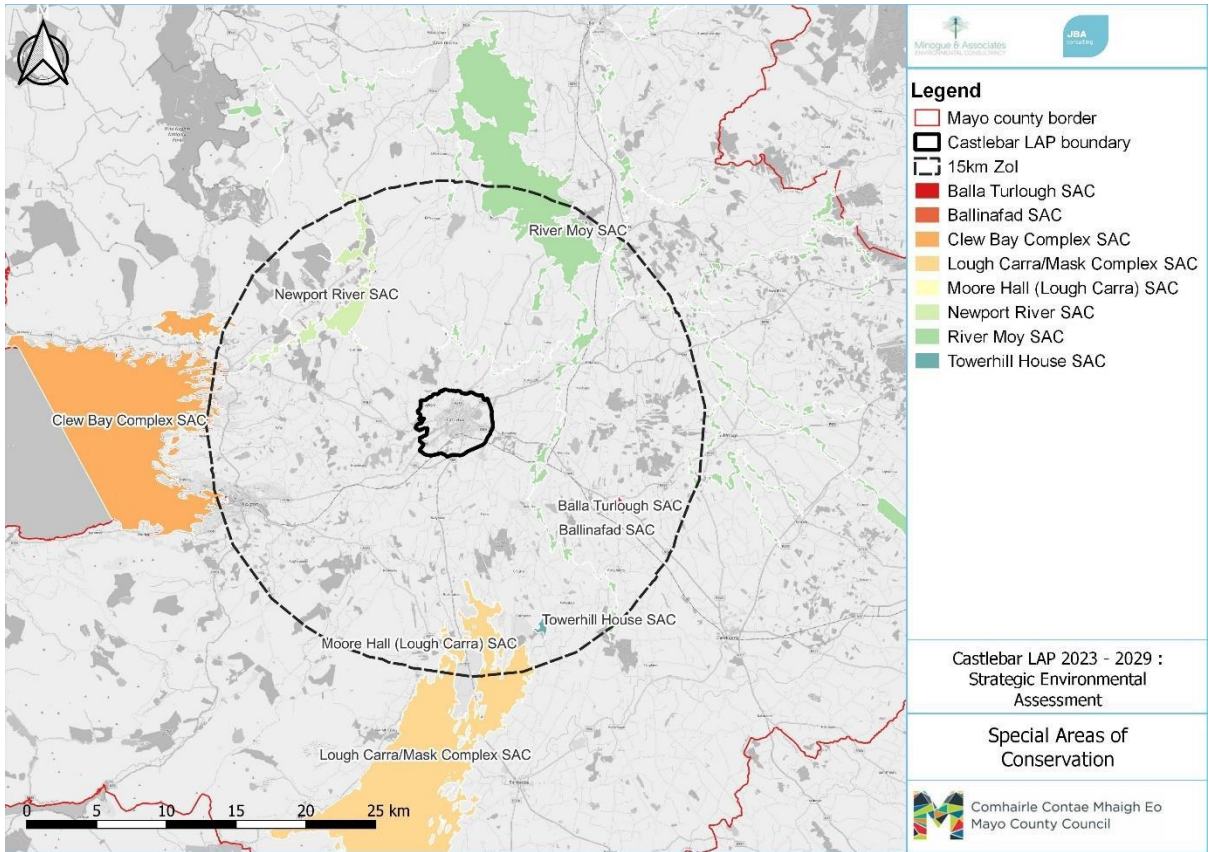
Best practice guidance recommends that all Natura 2000 sites within 15km (zone of influence) of the plan boundary be initially screened for impacts. This is an arbitrary distance and can be modified, as appropriate. There are seven SACs and four SPAs identified within the 15km radius (See Maps 9.1 and 9.2 below).

Special Areas of Conservation within the zone of influence include the following designated areas:

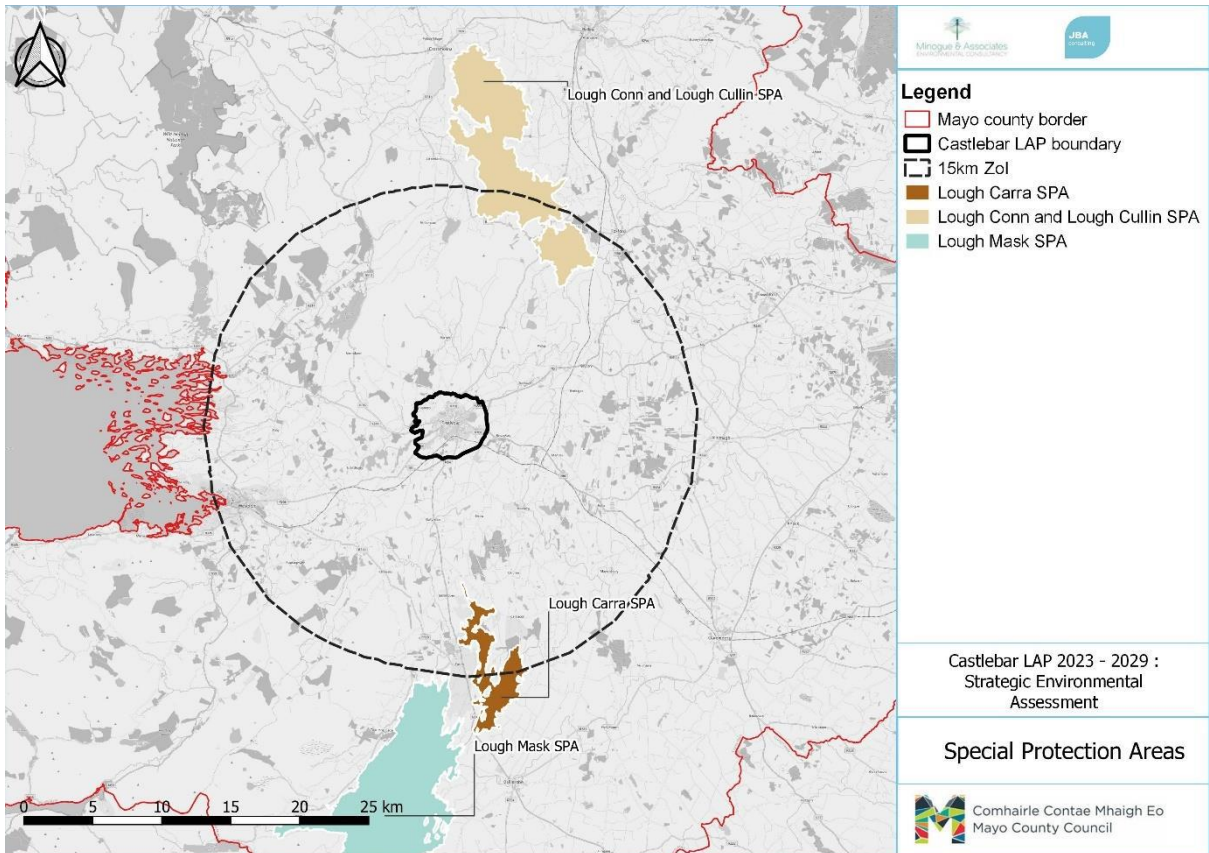
- Balla Turlough SAC
- Ballinafad SAC
- Clew Bay Complex SAC
- Lough Carra/Mask Complex SAC
- Moore Hall (Lough Carra) SAC
- Newport River SAC
- River Moy SAC
- Towerhill House SAC

Special Protection Areas within the zone of influence include the following designated areas:

- Lough Carra SPA
- Lough Conn and Lough Cullin SPA
- Lough Mask SPA



Map 9.1 - Castlebar boundary, 15km buffer and nearby Special Areas of Conservation



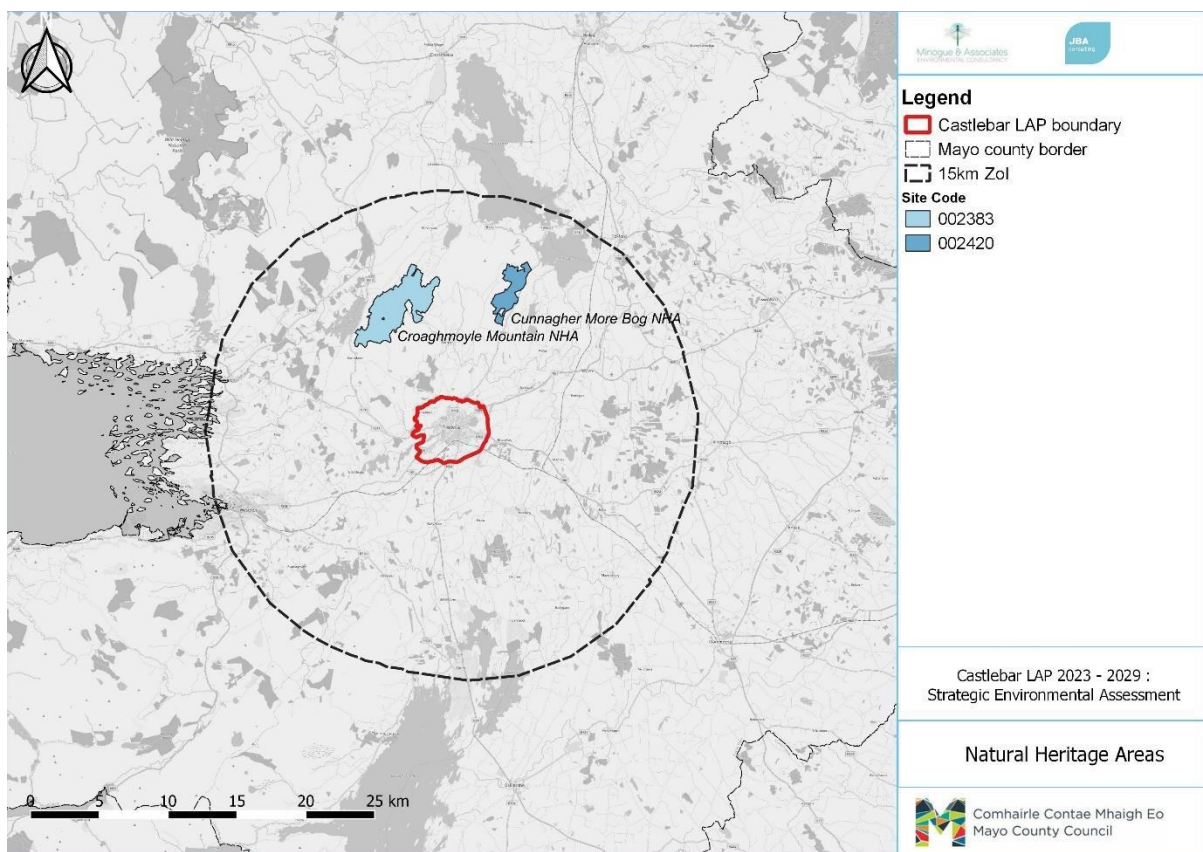
Map 9.2 - Castlebar boundary, 15km buffer and nearby Special Areas of Protection

9.4 Protected Species

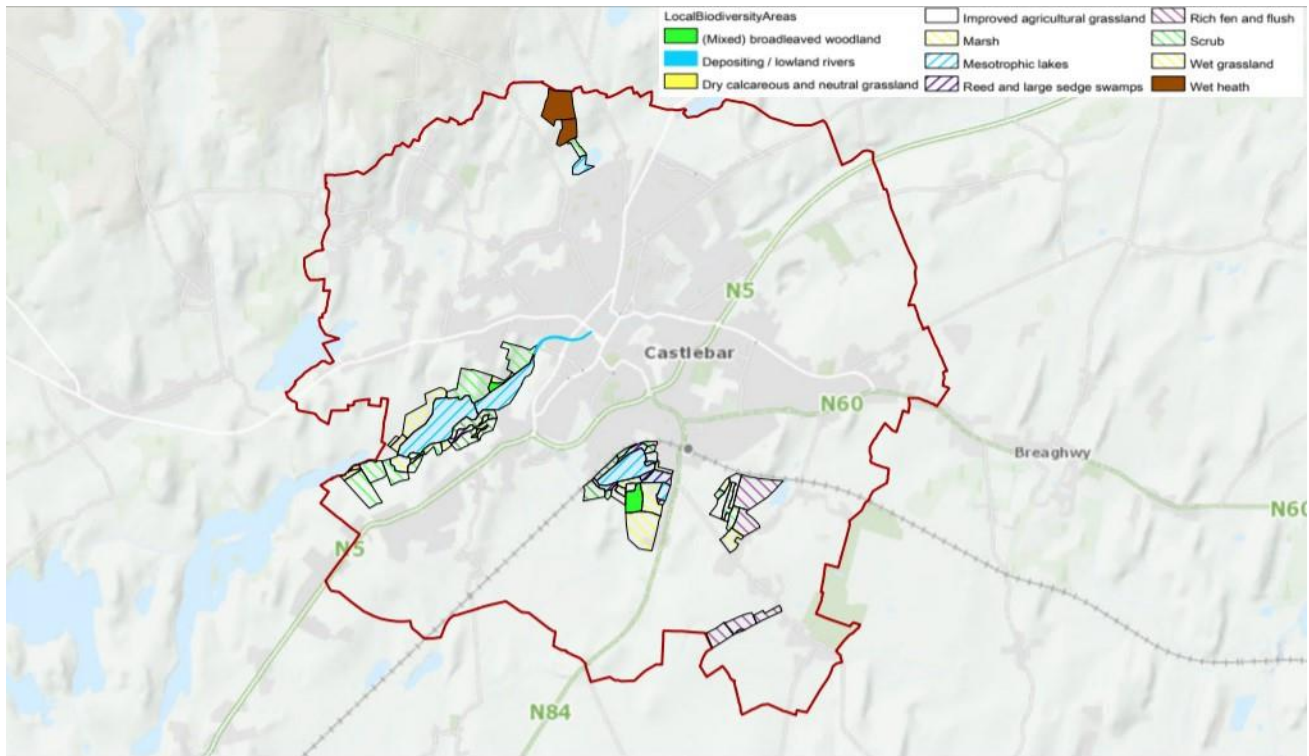
Certain plant, animal and bird species are protected by law. This includes plant species listed in the Flora Protection Order, 1999 (or other such Orders) and animals and birds listed in the Wildlife Act, 1976 and subsequent statutory instruments, those listed in Annex IV of the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC), and those listed in Annex I of the Birds Directive. Proposals for developments, where appropriate, will require an assessment of the presence of bats and/or other protected species and ensure that suitable avoidance and/or mitigation measures are put in place accordingly.

9.5 Local Biodiversity Zone

The Local Biodiversity Area (LBAs) forms part of the Mayo Habitat Mapping document published in 2008. Four LBAs were identified in the Plan area, two LBAs incorporate Saleen Lough and Lough Lannagh, with associated wetland and scrub habitats. The other LBAs occupy areas of alkaline fen and scrub to the south east and an area of wet heath and a small lake in the Rathbaun townland. The overall conservation findings within the LBAs are to maintain water quality, encourage restoration of semi natural wetlands and discourage development which would negatively impact upon the LBAs (i.e. discourage agricultural improvement)



Map 9.3 - Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs) within 15km buffer of Castlebar



Map 9.4 - Local Biodiversity Areas within the Castlebar LAP area

9.6 Invasive Species

Invasive non-native plant and animal species are a major threat to biodiversity and prohibitions are in place in relation to the introduction or dispersal of certain invasive species as set out in the Third Schedule of the European Communities (Birds and Habitats Regulations 2011 (S.I. 477/2011) and as set out in EU Regulations 1143/2014 on the Prevention and Management of the Introduction and Spread of Invasive Alien Species.

Invasive alien species can negatively impact on native species, transform habitats and threaten whole ecosystems causing serious problems to the environment and the economy. They may in certain cases pose a threat to human safety. There is potential for the spread of invasive species during excavation and construction works and for such species to be introduced into the environment via spreading from private gardens, boat users, horticulture etc. e.g. Japanese Knotweed and Himalayan Balsam.

9.7 Landscape

The varied landscape is an inherent part of Castlebar's natural heritage and as such it requires protection in its own right. Therefore, the landscape must be protected against development, which would undermine or change its character. It is paramount to Castlebar's future development only takes place where visual intrusion is minimal, particularly within areas of elevated topography or sparse vegetation. Castlebar is located within Area K – East Central Drumlin Spine of the current 'Landscape Appraisal for County Mayo'. This large geographical area is made up of glacial drumlins that are uniform at its western end near its transition with the distinct drumlins of Clew Bay.

9.8 Ecological Infrastructure

Ecological Infrastructure includes both Green and Blue Infrastructure. Green Infrastructure is the network of green spaces, habitats and ecosystems within a defined geographic area, which can range in size from an entire country to a neighbourhood. The Green Infrastructure network supports native plant and animal species and provides corridors for their movement. It maintains natural ecological processes and biodiversity, sustains air and water quality and provides vital amenity and recreational spaces for communities, thereby contributing to the health and quality of life of residents and visitors to Castlebar. Blue Infrastructure refers to water elements like rivers, canals, ponds, wetlands, floodplains, water treatment facilities, etc.

Central to the concept of a Green Infrastructure network is its multi functionality, performing several layered functions in a single shared space. Not only does it provide for a habitat for the maintenance and protection of wildlife, it delivers environmental services such as sustainable water drainage and flood protection whilst also enabling the provision of amenity and recreational activities for people. The most notable ecological corridor is the Great Western Greenway which runs through the centre of town from Turlough to the north-east towards Islandeady to the south-west. The section of the greenway in the Castlebar area runs along the Castlebar River, passes the Castlebar Town Park, and continues to Lough Lannagh. Much of this stretch has semi natural vegetation along the river.

Mayo County Council's approach to green and blue infrastructure is one that seeks to conserve and enhance the biodiversity and geological heritage and to promote the sustainable management of the landscape and waterways.

9.9 Trees and Hedgerows

Trees, whether individually or in groups, make a valuable contribution to the biodiversity and visual amenity of towns. Trees perform a number of roles including absorption of pollutants, filtering noise, producing oxygen, providing a habitat for wildlife and enhancing the environment. Mature trees and other individual and smaller trees form a valuable part of the urban environment by contributing to the distinctiveness of individual parts of the town.

Tree Preservation Orders will be served where they would effectively safeguard public amenity and preserve the character of the area. Inappropriate arboricultural work to protected trees will be resisted. Mature trees situated elsewhere in the town, whether in groups or individually, should be preserved, where possible. The existing tree stands at Lough Lannagh and Saleen Lough will be protected from encroaching development, in order to preserve their protected landscape character.

9.10 Natural Environment Policy and Objectives

Designated Sites Policy

It is a Policy of the Council to:

NEP 1	<p>In seeking to protect and enhance the natural environment, Mayo County Council will seek to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Protect, conserve and enhance the natural heritage of Castlebar, including the protection of the integrity of European sites, that form part of the Natura 2000 network. - Protect and conserve non-designated habitats and species; and - Protect and incorporate existing biodiversity features into the design and construction of new development and public realm and enhancing the biodiversity value of existing open spaces. - Where development proposals are made along a riparian corridor, ensure that a vegetated strip, informed by an ecological assessment to ensure it is robust and appropriate for wildlife and nature conservation along the river in consultation with the National Parks and Wildlife Service, is maintained.
NEP 2	<p>Seek to ensure that new plans or projects would not result in significant climatic impacts on European sites because of their scale, resource or transportation requirements, operation or emissions, either cumulatively or in combination with other development.</p>

Designated Sites Objectives

It is an Objective of the Council to:

NEO 1	Open up access to the Castlebar River for recreational and amenity purposes.
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Ecological Corridor Policy

It is the Policy of the Council to:

NEP 3	Protect, reinforce and strengthen the Green and Blue Infrastructure network in Castlebar and strengthen links to the wider regional network. This should be informed by appropriate ecological surveys and assessment.
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Ecological Corridor Objective

It is an Objective of the Council to:

NEO 2	Support and work with the local community in the development of blue and green infrastructure in the town and in the enhancement of the biodiversity and conservation value of the river and lakes corridors.
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Trees & Hedgerows Policy

It is the Policy of the Council to:

NEP 4	<p>There shall be a presumption against the felling, topping, lopping or wilful destruction of mature trees as part of development proposals. Where a development proposal involves the felling, topping, lopping or threatens the destruction of a mature tree or trees, a tree survey will need to be included in the submission, carried out by a qualified Tree Specialist to justify the exceptional circumstances for their interference.</p> <p>The applicant must demonstrate the justification and rationale for removal of mature trees in terms of effect on ecology and landscape and demonstrate how replacement planting will compensate for loss of trees and woodland features. An assessment of potential tree roost features by a qualified and experienced ecologist may also be requested as part of such proposals.</p>
NEP 5	<p>Protect and incorporate existing biodiversity features such as hedgerows and surface water features into the design and construction of new development and public realm. Where the loss of the existing features is unavoidable new biodiversity features should incorporate native species, and species of local provenance to replace the existing hedgerow.</p>

Trees & Hedgerows Objectives

It is an Objective of the Council to:

NEO 3	<p>Increase tree planting and pollinator friendly planting, in accordance with the recommendations of the All Ireland Pollinator Plan 2021-2025, and any future editions, throughout Castlebar and in open spaces in new developments in order to enhance local biodiversity, visual amenity and surface water management in partnership with relevant stakeholders.</p>
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Chapter 10 INFRASTRUCTURE AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

10.1 Strategic Aim

To phase future growth in line with the capacity of supporting physical infrastructure and to ensure it occurs in accordance with the principles of proper planning and sustainable development.

10.2 Introduction/Context

The ability of Castlebar to accommodate future development and remain a competitive location is dependent on the capacity and delivery of infrastructural support. The availability of high-quality physical infrastructure networks and environmental services is critical to securing investment, creating sustainable and attractive places, ensuring health and wellbeing while also safeguarding the environment. The Council will work with national, regional and local utility providers to safeguard the protection of existing infrastructure assets in the town and seek upgrades and enhancement, where necessary, to facilitate the sustainable growth of the town.

10.3 Surface Water Drainage Infrastructure

Mayo County Council is responsible for the management and disposal of surface water runoff within the public realm. All new development within Castlebar must account for how surface water runoff will be appropriately managed. The Council advocates surface water management through Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) and Nature Based Solutions. SuDS is widely recognised as a green infrastructure-based approach to drainage and storm water management. It aims to mimic the natural drainage of a site, to minimise the effect of a development on flooding and pollution of waterways, through various engineering solutions, including using porous surface treatments, ponds, swales, filter drains or other installations.

10.4 Flood Risk Management

A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) was prepared to guide the local area plan in accordance with the Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines (2009). The SFRA has been prepared as part of a suite of environment reports contained in Volume II of the Plan. The SFRA provides a detailed evidence-based review of the town, including site survey work and outlines provision to ensure flood risk is mitigated. The SFRA has been informed by the Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management (CFRAM) Programme which, under the responsibility of the OPW, deals with fluvial flood risk.

Fluvial flooding in Castlebar has been identified in the vicinity of the Saleen Lough and Lough Lannagh and along a narrow corridor along the Castlebar River, which flows through the centre of the town. This affects relatively few properties; however, there are areas of flooding which are currently undeveloped and within the development limits of the town. Therefore, there is a need to manage this flood risk in accordance with the flood risk management guidelines. The CFRAM flood maps for Castlebar provide the full flood extents for fluvial flooding in the town. Site selection and flood

prevention measures are therefore an important consideration for the development of Castlebar, especially if growth is planned in the south, in order to ensure no flood risk impacts and avoid inappropriate development.

Consideration of flood risk in the SFRA also acknowledges the role of climate change, and includes provisions to adapt to, and mitigate, climate change. The development framework of the Plan, informed by the SFRA, ensures a precautionary approach to flood risk management, greenfield lands at risk of flooding are zoned for agricultural or amenity purposes. Mayo County Council will require all developments within areas identified to be at flood risk to comply with the requirements of the Planning System and Flood Risk Assessment Guidelines (DEHLG, 2009) and Circular PL2/2014.

Proposals for development where there is an identified or potential flood risk will be required to carry out a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment, and Justification Test in accordance with these guidelines and the standards of the County Development Plan.

Changes of use, extensions and additions to existing buildings or minor development within flood risk areas will be considered based on their merit and will require a commensurate flood risk assessment in accordance with the 'Planning System and Flood Risk Assessment Guidelines (2009)'.

10.5 Drinking Water and Wastewater

Irish Water replaced Local Authorities as the single provider of water and wastewater services in 2014. Irish Water is responsible for the operation of public water and wastewater services nationally, including strategic planning, policy development, service provision, customer service and capital investment planning and delivery.

10.5.1 Drinking Water

In co-operation with Irish Water, the Council will contribute towards compliance with the European Union (Drinking Water) Regulations Drinking Water Regulations 2014 (as amended) and seek to undertake any remedial action as required. Castlebar receives its drinking water supply for the Lough Mask Regional Scheme. The scheme also serves Ballinrobe, Ballindine, Claremorris and their surrounding areas. The reservoir is deemed to be in good condition and the source is highly reliable. The current supply is capable of catering for the projected population growth. An upgrade to the Lough Mask Water Treatment (WTP) is due to be completed by Q1 of 2024.

It is fundamental to the sustained development of the area to protect water resources for drinking, bathing, fishing, water-based activities and conservation. At present, water sources are at risk from pollution due to excess development and agricultural practices. Therefore, all necessary measures must be taken to ensure that threat of contamination of sources must be reduced.

Groundwater is increasingly relied upon as a source of drinking water, particularly in areas not served by water mains. Depending on the geology of the area, aquifers can be vulnerable to contamination, particularly from wastewater treatment systems. It is crucial that such resources are protected from the risk of groundwater pollution. In this regard, the Groundwater Protection Scheme for County Mayo provides useful information on the relative aquifer potential and vulnerability to contamination.

10.5.2 Wastewater Treatment

Castlebar benefits from a public wastewater treatment system located at Knockthomas, which is designed to cater for a population equivalent (p.e) of 28,000. Based on current loading it is estimated there is approx. 11,839 p.e. capacity remaining in the plant. This capacity is sufficient to accommodate the projected increase in population for Castlebar and to facilitate enterprise. Future connections to this network from development on zoned and infill lands will be assessed through Irish Water's Connection and Developer Services process. In unserved areas within the plan area, the main method of sewage disposal is by means of individual septic tanks and proprietary wastewater treatment systems. Mayo County Council is the competent authority for the assessment and approval of individual domestic on-site wastewater treatment systems in the county.

Capacity - today (PE)	Load - in 2019 (PE)	Headroom (PE)
28,000	16,161	11,839

Table 10.1: Existing Capacity of the Castlebar WWTP

10.6 Energy Networks Infrastructure

A secure and resilient supply of energy is critical to the functioning of Castlebar. With increases in population and economic growth, the demand for energy intensifies. The main energy networks serving Castlebar are electricity and gas. Mayo County Council is also cognisant of national policy, which seeks to promote renewable energy use and generation at appropriate locations within the built and natural environment, to meet national objectives towards achieving a low carbon economy by 2050.

10.6.1 Electricity

Castlebar has a 38kV station located on the Turlough Road at Annalecka and a 10kV station at Knockaphunta and a 110kV/MV Castlebar Substation located to the north of the Roadstone quarry site at Moneen. Mayo County Council recognises that essential future upgrades are required to the electricity grid in the west, as outlined in Eirgrid's 'Tomorrow's Energy Scenarios 2019 System Needs Assessment'. The Council will support Eirgrid in future programmes identifying grid solutions, in both infrastructural and technological terms, in order to facilitate the electricity targets, set out in the Government's Climate Action Plan 2021 (as amended) and the National Energy and Climate Plan 2021-2030.

10.6.2 Natural Gas

Castlebar is served by the national gas network fed by the Corrib Gas Field pipeline, which runs from the terminal in Bellanaboy to Galway. Maintaining security of supply of gas is a governmental priority. The Government is also responsible for reducing Ireland's greenhouse gas emissions under the Climate Action Plan. The use of renewable sources of gas will have a key role to play in decarbonising the natural gas grid.

10.7 Waste Management

Mayo is located within the Connacht Ulster Waste Management Region, governed by the Waste Management Plan 2015 – 2021 (or superseding plan). Mayo County Council is the regional lead authority, acting on behalf of the other authorities with responsibility for the successful implementation of the plan. The Plan incorporates policies and objectives for waste management within the region. Refuse collection in Castlebar is currently carried out by a number of private contractors, and the Council operates recycling facilities for glass and cans at several locations throughout the town. The Council will continue to encourage and facilitate recycling at appropriate locations, whilst seeking to minimise waste through its environmental education programme and the Green Schools programme. The nearest civic amenity centres (Recycling Centres) are located at Derrinnumera, which is located between Newport and Castlebar and provides recycling facilities for a comprehensive range of waste materials.

Mayo County Council will continue to protect and enhance the environment within the plan area through waste management and the control of air, light and noise pollution. The Council recognises the importance of maintaining Castlebar as a litter free town and protecting it from indiscriminate dumping and advertising. Along with its legal obligations, Mayo County Council will work with the Tidy Towns Committee, schools and local residents' associations to increase awareness of waste recycling and litter control.

10.8 Information Communications Technology (ICT) and Broadband

The increasing use of digital technologies is impacting on every aspect of our lives, from education and leisure to health services. The Covid-19 pandemic highlighted that now more than ever better-connected services are vital to our continued growth, supporting businesses and enhancing our communities. Broadband is readily available in Castlebar. Several telecoms providers have network infrastructure serving the area, and provide various types of connectivity from fixed line, wireless, mobile broadband and fibre optic. Castlebar is also part of the Wifi4EU scheme, which is an initiative of the European Commission and provides funding to Local Authorities to provide free WI-FI hotspots in public areas. Mayo County Council will be guided by national policy in relation to importance of high-quality telecommunication services and the facilitation of improved internet and broadband infrastructure.

10.9 Infrastructure and Environmental Services Policies and Objectives

Flood Risk Management Policies	
It is the Policy of the Council to:	
IESP 1	Manage flood risk in Castlebar in conjunction with the Office of Public Works and in accordance with the requirements of the Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2009) and circular PL02/2014 (August 2014).
IESP 2	Extensions of existing uses or minor development within flood risk areas will be supported, provided they do not: obstruct important flow paths; introduce a number of people into flood risk areas; entail the storage of hazardous substances; have adverse impacts or

impede access to a watercourse, floodplain or flood protection and management facilities; or increase the risk of flooding elsewhere. Proposals of this nature shall be accompanied by a commensurate assessment of the risks of flooding in accordance with the Planning Systems Flood Risk Management Guidelines 2009.

Flood Risk Management Objectives

It is an Objective of the Council to:

IESO 1	<p>a) Manage flood risk in accordance with the requirements of “The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities”, DECLG and OPW (2009) and any revisions thereof and consider the potential impacts of climate change in the application of these guidelines.</p> <p>b) Require applications in areas at risk of flooding to be supported by a comprehensive flood risk assessment. All flood risk assessments should have regard to ‘The Planning System and Flood Risk Management’ (DEHLG and OPW, Nov.2009) as revised by Circular PL 2/2014, national flood hazard mapping, predicted changes in flood events resulting from climate change and the Moy-Killala Bay Catchment Flood Risk and Management Plan.</p> <p>c) Minimise flood risk arising from pluvial (surface water) flooding in Castlebar by promoting the use of natural flood risk management measures including sustainable drainage systems (SuDS), minimising extent of hard surface/paving, and smart solutions such as innovative green infrastructure.</p> <p>d) Demonstrate that future development will not result in increased risk of flooding elsewhere, restrict flow paths, where compensatory storage / storm water retention measures shall be provided on site.</p> <p>e) Have regard to the most up to date Flood Mapping as presented on the Office of Public Works (OPW) maps.</p>
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Drinking Water & Wastewater Policies

It is the policy of the Council to:

IESP 3	Discourage the over concentration/proliferation of individual septic tanks and treatment plants to minimise the risk of groundwater pollution.
IESP 4	<p>a) Support the implementation of the Irish Water Investment Plans.</p> <p>b) Liaise with Irish Water, to maximise the potential of existing capacity and to facilitate the timely delivery of new water services infrastructure, to facilitate existing and future growth.</p>
IESP 5	Support the implementation of the relevant recommendations and measures as outlined in the relevant River Basin Management Plan 2022-2028, and associated Programme of Measures, or any such plan that may supersede same during the lifetime of this plan.

Drinking Water & Wastewater Objectives

It is an objective of the Council to:

IESO 2	Ensure that on-site private wastewater treatment plants, where permitted, are operated in compliance with EPA's Code of Practice Domestic Waste Water Treatment Systems (Pollution Equivalent 10) (2021), as may be amended.
IESO 3	Where available, new development shall be obliged to connect to the public sewer and public water mains, subject to a connection agreement with Irish Water, in order to protect all waters in the plan area, and also to consolidate the urban structure and to control ribbon development along approach roads into Castlebar.
IESO 4	Support and facilitate the delivery of free outdoor drinking water refilling stations at appropriate locations.

Energy Network Policies

It is the policy of the Council to:

IESP 6	Support and promote the sustainable improvement and expansion of the electricity transmission and gas distribution network that supply the Castlebar LAP area, while taking into consideration landscape, residential, amenity and environmental considerations.
IESP 7	Promote and encourage the use of renewable energy technologies at appropriate locations within the Castlebar plan areas existing and proposed building stock, such as district heating, micro generation (photovoltaic, micro wind, micro hydro and micro combined heat and power) and other renewable energy technologies, which do not adversely affect residential amenity or environmental quality.
IESP 8	Support and liaise with statutory and other energy providers in relation to power generation, in order to ensure adequate power capacity for the existing and future needs of Castlebar.

Waste Management Policies

It is the policy of the Council to:

IESP 9	Protect environmental quality in Castlebar through the implementation of European, national and regional policy and legislation relating to air quality, greenhouse gases, climate change, light pollution, noise pollution and waste management.
IESP 10	Support waste reduction and sustainable waste management through prevention, reduction and recycling and by facilitating the provision of adequate waste infrastructure, such as bring banks, at locations that will not adversely affect residential amenity or environmental quality.

Waste Management Objectives

It is an objective of the Council to:

<p>IESO 5</p>	<p>Require all mixed-use, commercial and residential developments to be provided with adequate internal and external space for the correct storage of waste and recyclable materials and should accord with the Development Management Standards 4.11 of the Mayo County Development Plan 2022-2028. In particular, in relation to shared bin spaces such as apartment developments. In such cases the following must be provided for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Adequate space must be given for waste to be segregated and stored in an appropriate manner; - A multi occupancy development will require a designated, ventilated waste storage area of sufficient size which allows for the segregation of waste; - New and re-designed commercial buildings and apartment complexes should have waste facilities designed in a manner that waste can be collected directly from them and where possible waste and recyclables should not have to be collected on the street or at the front of the premises.
<p>IESO 6</p>	<p>Promote the prevention, reduction and recycling of waste in new developments, new development proposals shall be required to show how this is to be achieved and shall seek to ensure on site provision for waste storage and segregation (bio-waste/dry recyclables/residual waste) pending collection at all new domestic and non-domestic premises.</p>
<p>IESO 7</p>	<p>Adequately maintain recycling facilities and secure the provision of additional facilities, as required, including in conjunction with new developments.</p>
<p>IESO 8</p>	<p>Facilitate the installation of bring bank(s) at suitable locations within the plan area, which do not adversely affect residential amenity or environmental quality of the area.</p>

Information Communications Technology and Broadband Policies

It is the policy of the Council to:

<p>IESP 11</p>	<p>Co-operate with the relevant agencies to facilitate the undergrounding of all electricity, telephone and television cables in urban areas wherever possible, in the interests of visual amenity.</p> <p>Where undergrounding of cables is being pursued, proposals should demonstrate that environmental impacts including the following are minimised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Habitat loss as a result of removal of field boundaries and hedgerows (right of way preparation) followed by topsoil stripping (to ensure machinery does not destroy soil structure and drainage properties); • Short to medium term impacts on the landscape where, for example, hedgerows are encountered; • Impacts on underground archaeology; • Impacts on soil structure and drainage; and
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impacts on surface waters as a result of sedimentation.
IESP 12	Seek the undergrounding of all electricity, telephone and television cables in the town including the town centre and in residential and amenity areas.
IESP 13	Discourage a proliferation of above ground utility boxes in the town and to seek screening measures and discreet locations in conjunction with the provision of such structures.

Information Communications Technology and Broadband Objectives

It is an objective of the Council to:

IESO 9	Ensure that all new development proposals, incorporates communications service infrastructure broadband including ducting on an open access basis.
IESO 10	Facilitate the provision of adequate telecommunication infrastructure within the plan area, including telephone and broadband services, to the requirements of the relevant service providers and in accordance with the principles of proper planning and sustainable development.

Chapter 11 LAND USE ZONING OBJECTIVES

11.1 Strategic Aim:

To manage and deliver new development to ensure that it occurs in an orderly and efficient manner in accordance with proper planning and sustainable development.

11.2 Introduction

The quality of the built environment in Castlebar is dependent not only on building design and street layout, but also on smaller elements that can make an important contribution. For example, standards for landscaping, residential density, building heights, site coverage, street furniture and car parking standards can all play an important role in ensuring successful and sustainable new developments. Development proposals will be assessed in terms of the achievement of both qualitative and quantitative standards. Qualitative standards include design, layout, mix of new buildings and landscaping, whilst quantitative standards include density, plot ratio, site coverage, access, and roads standards. The general development management guidelines applicable to the plan area are set out Volume II of the Mayo County Development Plan, 2022-2028. Where conflict exists between this Plan and the County Development Plan, the CDP will take precedence.

The Planning Authority may exercise its discretion in relation to quantitative standards in certain circumstances on a case-by-case basis such as and not limited to:

- Where appropriate to the context and necessary to secure the urban design or other objectives of this plan.
- Performance based criteria, dependent on location and individual site characteristics, in accordance with the provisions of National Policy Objective 13.
- To facilitate comprehensive redevelopment in areas in need of urban renewal/redevelopment – or the delivery of appropriate uses on urban brownfield and infill sites.
- To maintain existing streetscape profiles.
- Where a site already has the benefit of a higher density, plot ratio and/or site coverage.
- Proximity to public transport termini and corridors, where an appropriate mix of residential and commercial uses is proposed.
- To comply with Specific Planning Policy Requirement (SPPR) set out in Section 28 Guidelines, particularly in town centre locations.
- To take account of the character, context and merits of each respective site and development proposal; to assist the delivery of appropriate uses on urban brownfield and infill sites; and to facilitate higher and increased building heights for appropriate uses at suitable locations.

11.3 Urban Design Principles

In order to underpin the development of Castlebar with sound urban design principles, the Plan places emphasis on encouraging a responsive design approach, particularly in areas of the town in need of regeneration. In tandem with the concept of ‘placemaking’, the Plan seeks to deliver sustainable urban growth through the creation of a distinctive, connected and enduring environment. To ensure that a ‘sense of place’ is at the heart of future development, this plan sets out the following urban design principles to inform and act as a guide for all development proposals within Castlebar town:

- i) **Coherence of the Urban Form:** Creation of new built form that is in keeping with the surrounding urban context. Such developments should seek to achieve continuity and enclosure through the construction of strong urban edges and legible built form.
- ii) **Permeability and Accessibility:** The development of a hierarchy of connected streets and spaces which are easy to get to, move through and prioritise people before traffic. Improve overall movement and connectivity within the town, with a particular focus on design awareness for pedestrians and cyclists.
- iii) **Quality of Open Space:** The provision of high-quality open spaces within developments that are valued by people who use them on a daily basis or pass through them. Open spaces should provide character and be a focal point for all developments and should not be overly dominated by hard landscaping and car parking.
- iv) **Place and Character:** Built form which creates an identity and reinforces locally distinctive patterns of townscape and landscape while securing compact growth based on regeneration and consolidation of the town through the use and adaptive re-use of structures, infill development and legible new urban development.
- v) **Adaptability and Variety:** The development of built form that is robust enough to respond to changing social, technological and economic conditions. Ensure that built form typologies are varied within development schemes to maintain a level of interest in the urban environment.
- vi) **Vibrancy:** Increase the number of people living and working in the town centre. Promote and increase the number of people visiting Castlebar for shopping, socialising, cultural and recreation activities.
- vii) **Attractiveness:** Ensure that attractiveness in new and regenerated buildings is achieved through the use of high-quality design, layout and material finishes.
- viii) **Diversity of Function and Use:** Promoting choice through a mix of compatible developments and uses to create a place that responds to the long-term needs of a growing community.
- ix) **Environmental Sustainability:** The promotion of local biodiversity; allowing the development of the town’s green infrastructure network, where new wildlife habitats become established and existing ones are protected and enhanced.

11.4 Land Use Zoning Objectives

The land use zonings are identified on Map 1 and should be read in conjunction with Table 11.1 (Land Use Zoning Objectives) and Table 11.2 (Land Use Zoning Matrix).

There are a wide range of land uses identified under each of the Land Use Zoning Objectives. Proposals for development will need to demonstrate compliance with the various written provisions of the Plan, as relevant, including those relating to environmental protection and management. Environmental considerations, such as those related to elevated levels of flood risk or European site ecological designations, may limit the types of uses that may be possible at certain sites. Prospective applicants are encouraged to engage with the Planning Authority at the earliest opportunity to seek guidance as to the appropriateness of emerging proposals.

Land Use Zoning - General

It is an Objective of the Council to:

LUZ 1

Ensure that development progresses in accordance with the land use zoning objectives as set out in Table 11.1 and the Land Use Matrix contained in Table 11.2.

Table 11.1: Land Use Zoning Objectives

It is an Objective of the Council to implement the following land use zoning objectives in Castlebar:

LUZ 2 - Town Centre Inner (TCI) & Outer (TCO)	To maintain and enhance the vitality, viability and environment of the town centre and provide for appropriate town centre uses.
LUZ 3 - Enterprise & Employment	To provide land for industrial, enterprise and employment uses.
LUZ 4 - Education	To provide land for educational use and ancillary facilities.
LUZ 5 - Existing Residential	To protect and improve the amenity and character of existing residential areas.
LUZ 6 - New Residential	To provide for high quality new residential development and other services incidental to residential development.
LUZ 7 - Strategic Residential Reserve	To protect and safeguard suitable, undeveloped lands for future multiple residential developments. These lands are generally not developable during the lifetime of this plan for multiple residential developments. This position will be reviewed by the Planning Authority periodically over the lifetime of the plan to ensure housing growth targets are achieved (Core Strategy Table). Where it is apparent that 'New Residential' lands cannot or will not be developed within the plan period, residential development maybe considered within Strategic Residential Reserve. Single houses shall only be considered on a limited basis, where it has been established that the lands in question do not adversely impact on the

	intended future use of these lands; form part of the overall family landholding and no other appropriately zoned lands are available within of the plan boundary; and a demonstrable economic or social need has been established (Objective RHO 1 of the Mayo County Development Plan).
LUZ 8 - Community Services / Facilities	To provide land for social, health, public administration and educational services and facilities.
LUZ 9 - Quarry/Mining	To provide for extraction / quarrying and associated activities including processing of extracted materials and land restoration.
LUZ 10 - Recreation & Amenity	To protect and improve the provision, attractiveness, accessibility and amenity value of public open space, amenity and recreation.
LUZ 11 - Agriculture	To reserve land for agricultural and rural uses and to preserve the amenity of the town setting.
LUZ 12 - Open Space	To preserve, provide for and improve active and passive recreational public and private open space.
LUZ 13 - Infrastructure & Utilities	To provide land for public infrastructure and public utilities.
LUZ 14 - Ancillary Uses	To ensure that developments ancillary to the parent use of a site are considered on their merits irrespective of what category the ancillary development is listed under in the zoning matrix of this County Development Plan.
LUZ 15 - Established Use/Non-Conforming Uses	To generally support reasonable extensions and improvements to premises that accommodate established/non-conforming uses, where it is considered by the Planning Authority that the proposed development would not be injurious to the amenities of the area and would be consistent with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

11.5 Land Use Zoning Matrix:

The land use zoning matrix (Table 11.2) details the most common forms of development land uses in accordance with the county's zoning objectives and classifies under the three below categories as to whether a proposed use is generally 'permitted in principle', 'open for consideration' or 'not normally permitted'.

P = 'Permitted in Principle'

The subject use is generally acceptable subject to the normal planning process, compliance with the relevant policies and objectives, standards and requirements as set out in the Local Area Plan and County Development Plan, and in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area. (Note: A proposal which is indicated as being 'Permitted in Principle' within the zoning matrix does not imply 'automatic approval' as each proposal for development is considered on its individual merits).

O = 'Open for Consideration'

The subject use may be permitted where the Local Authority is satisfied it complies with the zoning objective and other relevant policies and objectives, standards and requirements as set out in the County Development Plan, and will not conflict with the permitted, existing or adjoining land uses, in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

X = 'Not Normally Permitted'

The subject use is generally incompatible with the written zoning objective and will not be favourably considered by the Local Authority, except in exceptional circumstances and in such instances, the development may represent a material contravention to the plan.

Whilst the matrix does not provide an exhaustive list of potential uses, the uses listed in the matrix should be considered by applicants to provide a clear indication of the overall acceptability of a particular land use within a specific zoning category. Where a use is proposed that is not listed in the matrix, development proposals will be assessed on their individual merits in accordance with the general guidance provided by the matrix, and having regard to the nature of existing and proposed uses, to the general policies and zoning objective(s) for the area in the Local Area Plan and to the principles of proper planning and sustainable development. Where there is no perceived conflict between existing and proposed uses, favourable consideration will be given to the proposed development, subject to all other normal requirements and to the principles of the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

Land Use Zoning Matrix Table 11.2	Town Centre Inner	Town Centre Outer	New Residential	Existing Residential	Strategic Residential Reserve	Educational	Enterprise & Employment	Community Services	Recreation & Amenity	Agriculture	Open Space	Infrastructure & Utilities	Quarry / Mining
	Abattoir	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	O	X	X
Advertisement Billboards	O	O	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	X	O	O	X
Agricultural Structures	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	P	X	X	X
Amusement Arcade	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Apartments	P	P	P	P	P	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
B&B/ Guesthouse	O	O	P	P	O	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	X
Bank/ Financial Institution	P	P	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Batching Plant (asphalt/ concrete)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	O
Betting Office	O ²	O	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Boarding Kennels	X	X	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	O	X	X	X
Caravan Park / Campervan Park / Camp Site/ Glamping (Tourism)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	X
Car Parking	O	O	O	O	X	X	O	O	X	X	O	O	X
Cash & Carry Wholesale Outlet	X	X	X	X	X	X	P	X	X	X	X	X	X
Cemetery	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	O	X	O	X	X	X
Chemist/ Pharmacy	P	P	X	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	X	X	X
Childcare Facilities – Crèche, Nursery and Playschool	P	P	P	P	P	P	O	P	X	X	X	X	X
Cinema/ Theatre	P	P	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	X	X	X	X
Community Facility (hall, centre or recreational use)	P	P	O	O	O	X	X	P	X	O	X	X	X
Conference Centre	P	P	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Dance Hall/ Disco/ Night Club	O	O	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Data Centre	X	X	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	O	X	X	X
Dentist/ Doctor Surgery	P	P	X	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	X	X	X
Drive Through Restaurant	X	X	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	X	X	X	X
Education – excluding a night-time use	O	O	O	O	X	P	X	O	X	X	X	X	X
Education – night-time education use	O	O	X	X	X	P	O	O	X	X	X	X	X
Education – third level education use	O	O	X	X	X	P	O	O	X	X	X	X	X

² Shall be encouraged to be located off the primary Town Centre Central Spine.

Land Use Zoning Matrix Table 11.2	Town Centre Inner	Town Centre Outer	New Residential	Existing Residential	Strategic Residential Reserve	Educational	Enterprise & Employment	Community Services	Recreation & Amenity	Agriculture	Open Space	Infrastructure & Utilities	Quarry / Mining
	Education – training centre	O	O	X	X	X	O	O	P	X	X	X	X
Enterprise Unit/Workshop	P	P	X	X	X	X	P	X	X	X	X	X	X
Extractive Industry	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	P
Funeral Home	O	O	X	X	X	X	O	O	X	X	X	X	X
Fuel Depot	X	X	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	O	X	O	X
Garden Centre	O	O	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	O	X	X	X
Go-Kart Track	X	X	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	X	X	X	X
Hospital	O	O	X	X	X	X	X	P	X	X	X	X	X
Hostel	P	O	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Hotel	P	O	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Industry – Heavy	X	X	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	X	X	X	X
Industry – Light	X	X	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	X	X	X	X
Leisure Centre/ Gym	P	O	X	X	X	X	O	O	O	X	X	X	X
Library	P	P	X	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	X	X	X
Licensed Premises (Public House)	P	P	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Logistic, Storage & Distribution Units	X	X	X	X	X	X	P	X	X	X	X	X	X
Mart/ Co-operative	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	X
Motor Sales/ Service	O	O	X	X	X	X	P	X	X	X	X	X	X
Nursing Home/Retirement Village/Residential Care	P	P	P	P	P	X	X	O	X	X	X	X	X
Office	P	P	X	X	X	X	O ³	X	X	X	X	X	X
Open Space (Public)	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	X	X
Park & Stride Facility	X	O	X	O	X	X	O	X	X	X	O	X	X
Place of Worship	P	P	O	O	X	X	X	P	X	X	X	X	X
Plant/ Tool Hire	O	O	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	X	X	X	X
Playground	P	P	P	P	P	P	O	P	P	X	O	X	X
Playing Pitches/ Sports Club	O	O	P	P	P	P	X	P	P	P	O	X	X
Primary Care Centre, Health Centre and Clinics	P	P	X	X	X	X	X	P	X	X	X	X	X

³ Large offices which do not cater for visiting members of the public.

Land Use Zoning Matrix Table 11.2	Town Centre Inner	Town Centre Outer	New Residential	Existing Residential	Strategic Residential Reserve	Educational	Enterprise & Employment	Community Services	Recreation & Amenity	Agriculture	Open Space	Infrastructure & Utilities	Quarry / Mining
	Professional Services	P	P	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Residential – Multiple (two or more units)	P	P	P	P	P	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Residential – Single	P	P	P	P	P	X	X	X	X	O ⁴	X	X	X
Restaurant/ Café	P	P	X	X	X	X	O	O	X	X	X	X	X
Retail Warehousing	O	O	X	X	X	X	P	X	X	X	X	X	X
School / Third Level Education	P	P	O	O	X	P	X	O	X	X	X	X	X
Service Station	O	O	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Shop/Retail (Comparison)	P	O	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Shop/Retail (Convenience)	P	O	O	O	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Shopping Centre / Supermarket	P	O	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Take Away	P	O	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Traveller Accommodation	O	O	O	O	O	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Utility Structures	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	X	P	X
Veterinary Surgery	O	O	X	X	X	X	P	X	X	O	X	X	X
Warehousing	X	O	X	X	X	X	P	X	X	X	X	X	X

⁴ Subject to the Rural Housing Policy as outlined in the Mayo County Development Plan 2022-2028 (or subsequent plans)

Chapter 12 IMPLEMENTATION & MONITORING

12.1 Implementation Strategy

This Plan sets out a clear vision for Castlebar into the future. This vision is in accordance with the role identified for the settlement at a local, county and regional context and seeks to make Castlebar Town and Environs a more attractive place to live, work and visit. In order to achieve the stated vision, it is important that the individual measures put forward in this plan are delivered. The Council has a statutory obligation to implement the provisions of the Plan and is committed to securing its objectives.

The Council will progress the policies and objectives of the Plan:

- to advance Castlebar as a Key Town.
- to enhance economic activity, promote the transition to a low carbon town.
- to promote the Castlebar's unique cultural, built and natural heritage.
- to develop sustainable communities ensuring sustainable use of natural resources.

The development of the Local Area Plan has been based on the following sustainable principles:

- Promotion of compact development and the application of the 'sequential approach' advocated by national planning guidance, whereby zoning extends outwards from the town centre.
- Delivery of a sustainable transport system for Castlebar through the implementation of the Castlebar Local Transport Plan.
- Promotion of lands close to existing community and social infrastructure such as schools, the library, walkways/cycleways and open space and proximity to the bus stop.
- Cognisance has been taken of the need to provide upmost protection to the environment, built, natural and archaeological heritage of the historic town.

The responsibility for the implementation of policies and objectives of this Plan are dependent on a number of sources, including EU programmes and grants, the National Government, including the National Transport Authority, Mayo County Council and the private sector. Particularly relevant is funding available under the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund (URDF) operated under the Department of Rural and Community Development which is applicable to settlements with a population in excess of 10,000.

Mayo County Council will also require developers to incorporate relevant objectives and development management standards set out in the Mayo County Development Plan into proposals, where appropriate. Other objectives, particularly key infrastructural elements, will require government funding and support. Where appropriate, the Council will seek financing from specified sources, both the public and private sector, as well as from EU programmes and grants. The implementation of a plan may be constrained by a number of elements, namely, the economic climate, political support, allocated local authority funding, and the availability of funding from other sources. Therefore, no

funding of projects is guaranteed in advance nor is the implementation of all objectives contained within the plan.

It is intended that the various agencies, including voluntary groups, professional institutions, public and private bodies including Mayo County Council, and other organisations in Castlebar will be encouraged to participate whenever possible, in the implementation of the policies and objectives of this plan to move the settlement forward. The Plan will also be regularly reviewed in light of new legislation or guidelines, to assess progress, and to determine where amendments are required, a variation of the Plan will be necessary.

12.2 Development Contributions

Development contributions for the provision of services such as roads, footpaths and amenity / open space provision, etc will be applied where appropriate to development applications. The details and basis for the determination of the contributions are set out in the Mayo Development Contribution Scheme or any subsequent schemes adopted thereafter in accordance with the provision of section 48 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended).

12.2.1 Cash Deposit/Security

Depending on the nature of the development, the Council may require, as a condition of planning permission, the lodgement of financial security to ensure that the permitted development is satisfactorily completed.

The amount of the security will be determined by the Council and will be reviewed during the plan period. The security will be held by the Council until all works are satisfactorily completed to the exacting standards of the Council, or until the development is taken in charge by the Council.

12.2.2 Urban Regeneration Development Fund (URDF)

One of the key objectives of the NPF relates to the need for compact growth, with development being focused within and close to existing built-up areas. A core element of this approach is the regeneration of infill and brownfield sites. This is in line with the NPF targets of achieving at least 30% of all new homes within or contiguous to the built-up area of Castlebar. In this regard, it is an objective of Mayo County Council to promote measures to reduce vacancy and the underuse of existing building stock and support initiatives that promote the reuse, refurbishment and retrofitting of existing buildings within urban centres. 30% of lands zoned for residential purposes as part of this Plan have been identified for brownfield development.

The importance of the role of regeneration in the delivery of Project Ireland 2040 is acknowledged by the provision of the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund (URDF). The €2 Billion ten-year Urban Regeneration and Development Fund was launched in 2018 to support compact sustainable development, through the regeneration of Ireland's cities and large towns, in line with the objectives of Project Ireland 2040 (National Planning Framework and the National Development Plan, 2021-2030). The RSES provides the investment framework for Northern and Western Region. The types of proposals eligible for funding include strategic development areas, active land management,

measures to address building vacancy and refurbishment, public realm improvements, enabling infrastructure, sustainable mobility and transition to low carbon and climate resilience.

12.3 Active Land Management

The achievement of compact growth targets and regeneration will be supported through the implementation of active land management measures which promote the development of infill and brownfield lands, and strategically located greenfield sites that support the principles of consolidated growth. The Residential Zoned Land Tax is a key active land management tool to the delivery of houses on serviced sites in our towns and villages throughout Mayo.

In addition, there are significant portions of well-located lands served by public transport facilities, some of which are in public ownership. Building on the higher policy objectives set out by the 'Housing for All' Plan relating to the delivery of a new approach to active land management and to increase Social Housing Delivery and broader housing delivery, the Council will work together with the Housing Agency and Land Development Agency to facilitate the assembly/acquisition, financing, and appropriate redevelopment of these sites.

Mayo County Council will consider interventions such as site assembly using CPO, demolition and clearance or decontamination and the provision of facilitating infrastructure. When sites are acquired, the Council will decide on the most appropriate mechanism to ensure appropriate rejuvenation which may include redevelopment for civic or amenity uses, public and private housing or the release of the land back to the market for redevelopment.

The Council will actively source and leverage funds including the Local Infrastructure Housing Activation Fund (LIHAF), URDF, Climate Activation Fund and Disruptive Technologies Fund to achieve compact growth and regeneration of Castlebar. In this regard priority will be given to projects which result in social and economic rejuvenation and regeneration and the provision of amenities and services where these are deficient.

12.3.1 Phasing of Development

The timely provision of supporting infrastructure and community facilities in tandem with the development of areas is important in ensuring high quality, sustainable development takes place. All large-scale development proposals shall be phased having regard to the delivery of both physical and social infrastructure and orderly development.

12.3.2 Monitoring and Implementation

The Planning Department of the Council is the lead section responsible for monitoring and implementing the Plan, mainly through its development management function.

However, it is important to note that this Plan co-ordinates the work and objectives of not only of the Planning, Infrastructure and Economic Development directorates but also the Corporate and Emergency Services, Operations, Housing, as well as the Finance and Water Service directorates.

In some instances, the implementation of certain objectives may be the responsibility of external bodies such as OPW, Irish Water, National Parks and Wildlife Service, Fisheries Ireland, National Roads

Authority, Transport Infrastructure Ireland, and the Environmental Protection Agency etc. The Planning Authority will work in collaboration with the relevant external body to assist in ensuring the implementation of the relevant policy objective.

The Plan objectives are specific, measurable, achievable and realistic. However, a number are set within a longer timeframe, thus they may not be fully implemented over the lifetime of the plan period.

12.4 Implementation and Monitoring of the Core Strategy

The NPF states that new statutory guidelines, supported by wider methodologies and data sources, will be put in place under Section 28 of the Planning and Development Act to improve the evidence base, effectiveness and consistency of the planning process for housing provision at regional, metropolitan and local authority levels.

This will be supported by the provision of standardised requirements by regulation for the recording of planning and housing data by the local authorities in order to provide a consistent and robust evidence base for housing policy formulation. As such, Mayo County Council, will monitor ongoing developments in this respect and review the operation and implementation of this Plan. This includes adjustments as needed to ensure the effectiveness of its alignment with National and Regional policy and objectives.

Implementation and Monitoring Policy Objective	
IM 1	Monitor development for compliance with the objectives of the Core Strategy and adjust, where necessary, the approach taken to the consideration of development proposals in order to ensure effective alignment with the National, Regional and County policies and objectives.

12.5 Strategic Environmental Assessment

The SEA Directive requires that the significant environmental effects of the implementation of plans and programmes are monitored. Monitoring can both demonstrate the positive effects facilitated by the Plan and can enable, at an early stage, the identification of unforeseen adverse effects and the undertaking of appropriate remedial action.

The occurrence of significant adverse environmental effects not predicted and mitigated by this assessment, which are directly attributable to the implementation of the Plan, would necessitate consideration of these effects in the context of the Plan and potential remediation action(s) and/or review of part(s) of the Plan.

12.5.1 Indicators & Targets

Monitoring is based around indicators which allow quantitative measures of trends and progress over time relating to the Strategic Environmental Objectives identified in Section 5 of the SEA Environmental Report and used in the evaluation. Each indicator to be monitored is accompanied by

the target(s) which were identified with regard to the relevant strategic actions. Given the position of the Development Plan in the land use planning hierarchy beneath the Northern and Western Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES), the measures identified in that RSES SEA have been used – as they are or having been slightly modified – in most instances. This consistency across the hierarchy of land use plans will improve the efficiency and effectiveness of future monitoring programmes.

Table 9.1 of the SEA Environmental Report shows the indicators and targets which have been selected for monitoring the likely significant environmental effects of implementing the Plan, if unmitigated. Monitoring is an ongoing process, and the programme allows for flexibility and the further refinement of indicators and targets. The Monitoring Programme may be updated to deal with specific environmental issues – including unforeseen effects – as they arise. Many of the indicators relate to more than one of the freshwater and terrestrial environments.

12.6 Local Transport Plan

The Castlebar Local Transport Plan (LTP) will guide future transport investment in the area. The LTP is a short, medium to long-term plan that will be used to guide the towns transport strategy over the plan period and beyond. The strategic aim of the Castlebar LTP is to provide for the planning and delivery of transport infrastructure and services in Castlebar that will allow for the generation of a sustainable transport network that can cater for demand. The National Transport Agency are responsible for the issuing of funds for Local Transport Plan projects. The implementation of the LTP will lead to Castlebar being well positioned to be a leading town for sustainable transport.

12.7 Sources

The Plan will form part of the wider land use planning framework, which is comprised of a hierarchy of policies, plans, programmes, etc. This wider framework, including the National Planning Framework and the Northern and Western Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy, is subject to its own SEA (and associated monitoring) requirements.

In implementing the Monitoring Programme, the Council will take into account this hierarchy of planning and environmental monitoring. Sources for indicators may include existing monitoring databases (including those maintained by planning authorities and national/regional government departments and agencies) and the output of lower tier environmental assessment and decision making (including a review of project approvals granted and associated documents and the output of any EIA monitoring programmes).

Internal monitoring of the environmental effects of grants of permission in the Council would provide monitoring of certain indicators on a grant of permission basis. Where significant adverse as the result of a development to be permitted are identified, such effects could be identified, recorded and used to inform monitoring evaluation.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Settlement Capacity Assessment and Map

New Residential					Services				
Site No.	Location	Area - Hectare	Zoning	Tier	Lighting	Footpath	Water	Foul/Storm Sewer	Road
RS 1	Newport Rd	0.65	New Residential	1	√	√	√	√	√
RS 2	Garryduff	5.39	New Residential	1	√	√	√	√	√
RS 3	Glenfort/ Rathbawn/ Ballinaglough	11.1	New Residential	1	√	√	√	√	√
RS 4	Watersville	0.71	New Residential	1	√	√	√	√	√
RS 5	Turlough Rd	3.56	New Residential	1	√	√	√	√	√
RS 6	Turlough Rd	1.25	New Residential	1	√	√	√	√	√
RS 7	Turlough Rd	2.02	New Residential	1	√	√	√	√	√
RS 8	Rowan Drive	5.8	New Residential	1	√	√	√	√	√
RS 9	Upper Thomas Street	0.41	New Residential	1	√	√	√	√	√
RS 10	Cherrington Place	0.89	New Residential	1	√	√	√	√	√
RS 11	Station Rd / Lawn Rd	3.76	New Residential	1	√	√	√	√	√
RS 12	Lios na Circe	2.04	New Residential	1	√	√	√	√	√
RS 13	The Waterways	1.18	New Residential	1	√	√	√	√	√
RS 14	Chestnut Grove	1.87	New Residential	1	√	√	√	√	√
RS 15	Aglish	0.37	New Residential	1	√	√	√	√	√
RS 16	College View	0.55	New Residential	1	√	√	√	√	√
RS 17	Manor Village	1.25	New Residential	1	√	√	√	√	√

Opportunity Sites					Services				
Site No.	Location	Area - Hectare	Zoning	Tier	Lighting	Footpath	Water	Foul/Storm Sewer	Road
OS 1	Hat Factory	1.83	Town Centre	1	√	√	√	√	√
OS 2	Richard St	0.30	Town Centre	1	√	√	√	√	√
OS 3	Lannagh Rd	0.40	Town Centre	1	√	√	√	√	√
OS 4	Military Barracks	3.68	Town Centre	1	√	√	√	√	√
OS 5	Backlands / Castle St Car Park	1.32	Town Centre	1	√	√	√	√	√
OS 6	Hazel Grove	0.33	Town Centre	1	√	√	√	√	√
OS 7	The Mall / Rock Square	0.33	Town Centre	1	√	√	√	√	√
OS 8	Backlands / Mill Street	1.2	Town Centre	1	√	√	√	√	√
OS 9	The Mall / Ellison Street	0.45	Town Centre	1	√	√	√	√	√
OS 10	Adj McDonalds	0.22	Town Centre	1	√	√	√	√	√

Settlement Capacity Assessment Map

